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JAMIE RAMSAY  
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LEOR GALIL, DEANNA ISAACS, BEN  
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**GRAPHIC DESIGNER** SUE KWONG  
**MUSIC LISTINGS COORDINATOR**  
LUCA CIMARUSTI  
**FILM LISTINGS COORDINATOR**  
PATRICK FRIEL  
**CONTRIBUTORS** NOAH BERLASKY,  
ISA GIALLORENZO, JOHN GREENFIELD,  
ANDREA GRONVALL, KT HAWBAKER,  
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**DISTRIBUTION CONCERNS**  
distributionissues@chicagoreader.com

**CHICAGO READER**  
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## CHICAGO READER TO GET NEW OWNERSHIP

The Reader is being sold to a group led by *Chicago Crusader* publisher Dorothy Leavell.

Sun-Times Media, which has owned the weekly since 2012, announced the sale Friday.

For 50 years, Leavell has published the *Chicago Crusader* and *Gary Crusader*, which cover African-American communities throughout the area. She is president of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, a black press trade association with 200 member newspapers, and was inducted into the National Association of Black Journalists Hall of Fame in 2015.

"The Reader is a beloved Chicago institution with an important history of investigative journalism and cultural reporting," she said. "Our goal as new ownership is to preserve and strengthen this brand and to make the paper accessible to all Chicago communities."

The Reader, which has been publishing since 1971, has a circulation of 85,000.

"We love the Reader and have worked hard to be sure it has a foundation for the future," said Sun-Times Media CEO Edwin Eisendrath. "All of us at the Sun-Times are thrilled that the Reader's future is in such good hands."

Dave Roeder, organizer at the Chicago News Guild, the union that represents the Reader staff, welcomed the news.

"We look forward to helping the new owners broaden the audience for its excellent work," Roeder said. "We also thank Edwin Eisendrath and his investors, including organized labor, for having preserved the Reader's independent voice."

The deal is expected to close in the next 30 days. 



# The Bike Issue

**Bike the city in peace using our Mellow Chicago Bike Map, drink and ride in northwest Indiana, meet Woodlawn's mechanics in training and more 13**

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# Why Haven't Senior Homeowners Been Told These Facts?

## Keep reading if you own a home in the U.S. and were born before 1955.



**FACT:** In 1988, President Reagan signed an FHA bill that put HECM loans into law.

It's a well-known fact that for many senior citizens in the U.S. their home is their single biggest asset, often accounting for more than 50% of their total net worth.

Yet, according to new statistics from the mortgage industry, senior homeowners in the U.S. are now sitting on more than **6.1 trillion dollars** of unused home equity.<sup>1</sup> With people now living longer than ever before and home prices back up again, ignoring this **"hidden wealth"** may prove to be short sighted.

All things considered, it's not surprising that more than a million homeowners have already used a government-insured Home Equity Conversion Mortgage or "HECM" loan to turn their home equity into extra cash for retirement.

However, today, there are still millions of eligible homeowners who could benefit from this FHA-insured loan but may simply not be aware of this **"retirement secret."**

Some homeowners think HECM loans sound "too good to be true." After all, you get the cash you need out of your home but you have no more monthly mortgage payments.

### NO MONTHLY MORTGAGE PAYMENTS?<sup>2</sup> EXTRA CASH?

It's a fact: no monthly mortgage payments are required with a government-insured HECM loan;<sup>2</sup> however the homeowners are still responsible for paying for the maintenance of their home, property taxes, homeowner's insurance and, if required, their HOA fees.

Another fact many are not aware of is that HECM reverse mortgages first took hold when President Reagan

signed the FHA Reverse Mortgage Bill into law 29 years ago in order to help senior citizens remain in their homes.

Today, HECM loans are simply an effective way for homeowners 62 and older to get the extra cash they need to enjoy retirement.

Although today's HECM loans have been improved to provide even greater financial protection for homeowners, there are still many misconceptions.

For example, a lot of people mistakenly believe the home must be paid off in full in order to qualify for a HECM loan, which is not the case. In fact, one key advantage of a HECM is that the proceeds will first be used to pay off any existing liens on the property, which frees up cash flow, a huge blessing for seniors living on a fixed income. Unfortunately, many senior homeowners who might be better off with HECM loan don't even bother to get more information because of rumors they've heard.

That's a shame because HECM loans are helping many senior homeowners live a better life.

In fact, a recent survey by American Advisors Group (AAG), the nation's number one HECM lender, found that over 90% of their clients are satisfied with their loans.

While these special loans are not for everyone, they can be a real lifesaver for senior homeowners.

The cash from a HECM loan can be used for any purpose. Many people use the money to save on interest charges by paying off credit cards or other high-interest loans. Other common uses include making home

improvements, paying off medical bills or helping other family members. Some people simply need the extra cash for everyday expenses while others are now using it as a "safety net" for financial emergencies.

If you're a homeowner age 62 or older, you owe it to yourself to learn more so that you can make an informed decision. Homeowners who are interested in learning more can request a free 2018 HECM loan Information Kit and free Educational DVD by calling American Advisors Group toll-free at 1-(800) 840-3558.

At no cost or obligation, the professionals at AAG can help you find out if you qualify and also answer common questions such as:

1. What's the government's role?
2. How much money might I get?
3. Who owns the home after I take out a HECM loan?

You may be pleasantly surprised by what you discover when you call AAG for more information today.

<sup>1</sup>Source: <http://reversemortgagedaily.com/2016/06/21/seniors-home-equity-grows-to-6-trillion-reverse-mortgage-opportunity>. <sup>2</sup>If you qualify and your loan is approved, a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) must pay off any existing mortgage(s). With a HECM loan, no monthly mortgage payment is required. A HECM increases the principal mortgage loan amount and decreases home equity (it is a negative amortization loan). AAG works with other lenders and financial institutions that offer HECMs. To process your request for a loan, AAG may forward your contact information to such lenders for your consideration of HECM programs that they offer. When the loan is due and payable, some or all of the equity in the property no longer belongs to borrowers, who may need to sell the home or otherwise repay the loan with interest from other proceeds. AAG charges an origination fee, mortgage insurance premium, closing costs and servicing fees (added to the balance of the loan). The balance of the loan grows over time and AAG charges interest on the balance. Interest is not tax-deductible until the loan is partially or fully repaid. Borrowers are responsible for paying property taxes and homeowner's insurance (which may be substantial). We do not establish an escrow account for disbursements of these payments. A set-aside account can be set up to pay taxes and insurance and may be required in some cases. Borrowers must occupy home as their primary residence and pay for ongoing maintenance; otherwise the loan becomes due and payable. The loan also becomes due and payable when the last borrower, or eligible non-borrowing surviving spouse, dies, sells the home, permanently moves out, defaults on taxes or insurance payments, or does not otherwise comply with the loan terms. American Advisors Group (AAG) is headquartered at 3800 W. Chapman Ave., 3rd & 7th Floors, Orange CA, 92868. (MB\_0911141), (Illinois Residential Mortgage Licensee; Illinois Commissioner of Banks can be reached at 100 West Randolph, 9th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60601, (312) 814-4500). V2017.08.23\_OR





## ON CULTURE

# Now you see it, now you don't

After the city accidentally whitewashed a landmark neighborhood mural, artists and activists demand a clear policy.

By DEANNA ISAACS

Chicago loves the murals of Sandra Antongiorgi and Marcus Akinlana.

In 2017 Antongiorgi's *Weaving Cultures*, a collaboration with Sam Kirk, was chosen by *Reader* readers as the best in the city, while Akinlana's *The Great Migration*, painted in 1995, was prominently featured in the city's Year of Public Art program.

But last month, *Es Tiempo de Recordar*, a huge two-part mural Antongiorgi and Akinlana had painted with artist Ralph Mueller in 1992, got a different kind of attention from the city. On May 11, a crew from the Department of Streets and Sanitation whitewashed it.

*Es Tiempo de Recordar* ("It's Time to Remember") was painted by the then-young artists and a group of neighborhood youngsters on both sides of a railroad viaduct at Bloomingdale and Pulaski on the border of Logan Square and Hermosa. They'd been commissioned by the Chicago Public Art Group and Youth Service Project to produce something that would represent the community. "We asked the kids what they wanted, and most of them were Puerto Rican," Antongiorgi recalled last week. The lushly rendered mural celebrated the music, art, and history of the Caribbean, especially Puerto Rico. The south wall depicted a pair of back-to-back musicians

(one of them looked a lot like Antongiorgi, who's a musician and singer as well as a visual artist; the other resembled Akinlana). Facing them on the north wall was a mythic giant that Akinlana describes as a "Super Taino [a member of one of the original indigenous Caribbean tribes] aiming an arrow of music their way."

The mural, which covered about 2,000 square feet and had been carefully restored by Antongiorgi in 2010 with funding from the community development organization Archi-Treasures, was completely wiped out—apparently speedily and without consultation with anyone who might care. Neither the artists nor the aldermen were contacted (its 200-foot span bridged the 26th and 35th Wards). "It was such an aggressive act," Antongiorgi says. "I can't imagine somebody not questioning why they're whitewashing 200 [linear] feet of a mural that had been in the community 26 years."

When Chicago Public Art Group executive director Steve Weaver asked the city what had happened, he says he received an e-mail from the Department of Streets and San that said the mural had been covered "top to bottom, and left to right" in offensive graffiti and gang symbols.

But artist John Vergara, who leads mural

## CITY LIFE

The two musicians that represented the artists

SCOTT THOMPSON

tours for at-risk kids in the neighborhood and who's painted or restored about 50 murals in Chicago himself, says *Es Tiempo de Recordar* was on his tour route and looked fine when he saw it on May 7: "There was a small tag on there, but it was no more than a couple of feet, totally repairable." It was a beautiful mural, Vergara says, "but it's an eyesore now, just a big white canvas inviting gang members or taggers to go ahead and destroy."

Vergara says other murals in the area have also vanished, to his sorrow. "But the one that really, really aggravated me was this one. It was one of the oldest murals in this neighborhood. There should be some sort of law or policy in place saying that if a mural's up so long, and has been restored, it should have some sort of landmark status. The city needs to be aware of the difference between graffiti, gang graffiti, and public art."

The Department of Streets and Sanitation, which says it responds to more than 100,000 calls for graffiti removal annually, has owned up to making a mistake in this case. An e-mailed statement from the department to the *Reader* read: "Unfortunately, during a recent graffiti removal job, crews covered the 'Es Tiempo De Recordar' mural in Hermosa in error. We recognize the importance of public art and remain committed to working with residents and communities to ensure that murals in the City are protected."

And the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events said in its own statement, "We were disheartened to learn of recent events, and have committed ourselves to working closely with our City partners on a plan to protect murals throughout the city."

Weaver and the artists were scheduled to meet with DCASE this week, and Weaver says they have three goals: to make sure there are policies in place restricting painting over public art and that they're clear and followed by the Department of Streets and Sanitation; to bring attention to the pattern of destroying cultural assets in Chicago; and to find funding to restore *Es Tiempo de Recordar*.

"What we want is some kind of policy to come out of this," Weaver says. "Some kind of directive that they cannot destroy public art without, at the very least, contacting the alderman." ■

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From left: *The Green Bay Tree* and *Pink Orchids*  
 © DAVID ZAK

## THEATER

## History boys

*Pink Orchids* and *The Green Bay Tree* attempt to connect the queer past and present.

By DAN JAKES

In a 2016 column in the British gay magazine *Attitude*, playwright Patrick Cash confessed to a dick move he committed early on in his dating life, when he was 23 years old. After meeting and hooking up with “one of the nicest people [he’d] ever met,” a 20-year-old man who disclosed his HIV-positive status before initiating consensual and protected sex, Cash gave in to fear and stigma the following morning. “His status was why I didn’t call up the boy again.”

Cash has educated himself about the realities of HIV and the socially harmful effects of misinformation in the years since, but when it comes to pernicious and enduring attitudes levied against people who are poz, it only takes a few seconds of scrolling through dating apps like Grindr or Scruff to see still-normalized qualifiers like “DD-free” (“drug” and “disease,” initials jammed together as if they’re one and the same moral imperative) and, even more shudder-inducing, “clean guys only.”

Originally performed and published as *The HIV Monologues*, Cash’s *Pink Orchids* employs a series of speeches by fictional nurses, artists, and lovers past and present to bridge the experience gap between those who lived through

the catastrophic HIV crisis era of the 80s and 90s with the more protected, albeit still stigmatized poz community of today.

After connecting online, Alex (Jerome Beck) and Nick (Don Baiocchi) meet and quickly bond over their mutual interests: Harry Potter, Britney, and gay porn. When Nick divulges his recent HIV diagnosis, Alex’s reaction—a botched sitcom-style escape attempt through a bathroom window—sets off a series of personal growth opportunities for both men. It’s a testament to Beck’s stage presence and charismatic sweetness that his character’s dismissive and cruel French exit doesn’t write him off to audiences entirely—rather, Cash’s slight but moving one-act play sees him through to a more accepting, more educated place.

Brennan T. Jones’s production, presented as one part of the five-play PAC Pride Fest, features a number of tender, well-crafted direct-to-audience addresses, including a stirring speech by Kathleen Puls Andrade as an AIDS nurse facing down angry protesters. In another highlight, Nick recalls how he only notices just how filthy he’s allowed his bathroom to become while he’s stewed in a depressive crisis when he finds himself cowering

and sobbing in the shower. Bit by bit, he cleans away the dust and grime—a small but critical victory of self-love.

Like *Pink Orchids*, Amy L. Sarno’s production of *The Green Bay Tree* seems ripe for connecting the present with the past—in this case, literally. Written by Mordaunt Shairp in 1933 and adapted by Tim Luscombe, *The Green Bay Tree* is—or at least can be—a fascinating study of the historic stereotype of the queer villain. A wealthy and decadent man of leisure (Alexander McRae) “adopts” Julian (Bradley Halverson), a much younger man, as his ward. Though a sexual or romantic relationship is never made explicit, the two are clearly written as a couple, a fact made even more clear by the older man’s rampant jealousy once a woman enters the picture.

After coming of age, Julian announces his intention to marry a woman (Kristen Alesia). She and his biological father (Gary Smiley) band together to save him from the sinister paternal figure who is dead set on imprisoning the boy in a gilded cage of his own.

This *insanely* problematic story (and you thought *Call Me by Your Name* was tricky territory) seems like great material for a

heavy-handed satirical take that comments on how far the LGBTQ+ community has come from the stock characters of yore, or maybe it could serve an earnest production that presents an academic study and appreciation for 20th-century theater conventions.

**PINK ORCHIDS** Through 7/7: Thu-Fri 7:30 PM (except Thu 7/5), Sat 3:30 PM; also Sun 7/1, 7:30 PM.

**THE GREEN BAY TREE** Through 7/8: Wed and Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM; also Thu 7/5, 7:30 PM.

Pride Arts Center, 4139 N. Broadway, 773-857-0222, [pridefilmsandplays.com](http://pridefilmsandplays.com), \$23-\$25.

It’s not clear exactly what vision Sarno had in mind—from casting (aside from one of them having a shaved head, there’s little apparent age difference between the older man and his ward) on down to the actors’ evident discomfort being off book, this production is more focused on scraping by with the basics just to make it to the final curtain.

That’s particularly troublesome when it comes to the play’s comedic quips, which—even when played to a decently filled house—were met with perplexed silence on the night I attended. Inexplicably, long stretches of quiet activities like tea tray setting and flower clipping result in a surreal, fuguelike theatrical state akin to what it feels like to read the webcomic Garfield Minus Garfield. **A-**

@DanEJakes



# GEORG JENSEN

## SCANDINAVIAN DESIGN FOR LIVING



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Harald Nielsen. Pitcher, model 606, designed 1930, produced 1930–32. Promised gift from a private collection.

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## THEATER

### Gender wars

A playwright's attack on her own character amounts to *Empty Threats*.

God knows what Victor, a hapless English professor holed up in his temporary university office, is up to at the beginning of Neo-Futurist Lily Mooney's new play. Pants around his ankles, he kneads his stomach with a pillow and then his fists, grunting noncommittally as though caught between masturbation and vocal warm-ups. In he barges Mooney, calling herself Herself but also admitting (eventually) to being the evening's playwright, coy, detached, vaguely threatening, alternately insisting that Victor has failed her and that he must read her paper on *Frankenstein*—or more accurately, on Mary Shelley's introduction to *Frankenstein*, since she acknowledges she never read the novel. Throughout, she steals impish glances at the audience as though conceding this whole affair is idiotic.

And God knows what playwright Mooney is up to for the rest of these equally elusive 90 minutes. The pervasive ambiguity makes for a savvy first hour, as Mooney keeps a tight focus on the slippery interplay between Herself and Victor (a deliciously bland Jared Fernley), lampooning, reversing, and reifying certain gendered power dynamics routinely overcooked on local stages (in one particularly inspired moment, Mooney has a near breakdown realizing her theatrical efforts amount to little more than a half-baked *Oleanna*). It's charming and penetrating and just metatheatrical enough to keep everything simultaneously coherent and off-balance.

But in the final half hour Mooney unhelpfully widens her focus, chasing numerous self-referential ideas down conceptual dead ends and indulging in scattershot anecdote assemblage rather than meaningful resolution of her tantalizing material. —JUSTIN HAYFORD *EMPTY THREATS* Through 7/14: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, NeoFuturists, 5153 N. Ashland, 773-878-4557, [neofuturists.org](http://neofuturists.org), \$25, \$10 students and seniors, Thu pay what you can.

### It's a bird! It's a plane!

Sluggish stage combat is *Fight Quest 4 Peace's* kryptonite.

Otherworld Theatre has taken over the former Public House Theatre space in Lakeview, and the acquisition may have taken a big bite out of the operating budget, because its debut production there is a continuation of the very cost-effective *Fight Quest* series. *Fight Quest 4 Peace* features an ensemble of actors improvising a superhero story based on suggestions from the audience; the improv forms the connective tissue between choreographed fight scenes. The design is bare-bones, and while this makes for affordable, low-stakes summer theater, it doesn't represent the company's heightened sci-fi/fantasy aesthetic.

The production begins with a short opening act of stand-up comedy followed by a 15-minute intermission, which is far too long and doesn't even boost bar sales because it's not enough time to finish a drink. The improvised scenes get some solid laughs, and the cast creates a fun, energetic atmosphere, but as a stage combat showcase, *Fight Quest 4 Peace* could use some significant tightening.

The best stage combat requires precision, power, and speed to convince the audience there's an element of danger present. *Fight Quest 4 Peace* needs to up



the tempo and put more passion behind the moves, because the slower the action, the more it looks like the actors are holding back so that they don't accidentally hurt each other. The action sequences have sporadic moments where the fighters sell the illusion of real violence, but in general they suffer from the sluggish restraint that slows the driving force of the show. —OLIVER SAYA *FIGHT QUEST 4 PEACE* Through 7/7: Fri-Sat 7:30 PM, Otherworld Theatre, 3914 N. Clark, 815-277-7855, [otherworldtheatre.org](http://otherworldtheatre.org), \$10 suggested donation.

### Forget it

The farce *Fuddy Meers* makes a critic long for amnesia.

Eclectic Full Contact Theatre presents David Lindsay-Abaire's nails-on-a-chalkboard farce about a woman whose amnesia makes each day a completely blank slate. When Claire wakes up she doesn't remember she's married with a son, whether she drinks coffee, or even her own name. Her husband has helpfully put together a book of facts and photos of her life that he hopes will help her day go smoother. But can he be trusted?

I'll spare you the suspense: the answer is an emphatic no. In fact, no one in this play, from Claire's stroke-impaired mother to the hideously deformed kidnapper who poses as her brother to his mentally challenged, sock-puppet-wearing underling can be trusted, empathized with, or even tolerated for very long.

The title of this bonanza of ugliness and cruelty is a mispronunciation of "funny mirrors," as in the distorting kind found at the carnival. Due to her stroke, Claire's mother's speech is slurred to such an extent that half her lines are rendered unintelligible. No doubt it's the playwright's intent to make this and every other grotesque impediment—of which there are dozens, generously doled out to every miserable participant—an evocation of Claire's nightmarish daily plight. But because Claire is neither likable nor compelling in any way, none of the grotesquery that befalls her comes off as earned or impactful. This is one Punch and Judy show all concerned should be thankful to forget. Katherine Siegel directed. —DMITRY SAMAROV *FUDDY MEERS* Through 7/8: Thu-Fri 8 PM, Sat 2 and 8 PM, Sun 2

The Laramie Project EMILY SCHWARTZ

double-plus duty, portraying the Tectonic company members as well as the numerous Laramie citizens they spoke with. This structure illuminates the play's narrative, which shows how two very different communities—the New York actors, several of whom were themselves gay or lesbian, and the Laramie townsfolk, several of whom struggled to reconcile their horror at Shepard's brutal killing with their religion-based disapproval of homosexuality—affected each other, experiencing a shared healing despite sometimes vast cultural and emotional differences.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Shepard's killing, a landmark event in American LGBTQ+ history, and AstonRep Theatre Company's staging, directed by Derek Bertelson, is the second Chicago production of *The Laramie Project* this summer. But the play speaks to more than LGBTQ+ issues. It addresses fundamental questions that are more relevant than ever in our divided, angry nation. Will we allow ourselves to be shaped by hate or compassion? Cruelty or kindness? Fear or hope? —ALBERT WILLIAMS *THE LARAMIE PROJECT* Through 7/8: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 3 PM, Raven Theatre, 6157 N. Clark, 773-828-9129, [astonrep.com](http://astonrep.com), \$25.

### Oh hell . . . OK?

The two improv teams in *Oh Hell Yeah* demonstrate that timing is everything.

Timing is everything. *Oh Hell Yeah*, a new improv double bill consisting of the iO teams Alterboyz and Wet Bus, clearly demonstrates this truism. Alterboyz practices slow, patient improv while Wet Bus speeds through its set with quick wit, rapid physicality shifts, and bold scene initiations. Wet Bus masters the tempo while Alterboyz falls victim to it.

Alterboyz's scenes are full of pregnant pauses, which read as trepidation about the next line or where a scene is headed. There is much standing, talking, and thinking. On the night I attended, the three improvisers transported themselves to a small farm. They spoke

PM; no afternoon performance Sat 6/23, Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport, [eclectic-theatre.com](http://eclectic-theatre.com), \$25-\$30.



### What kind of nation are we?

Twenty years on, *The Laramie Project* is as relevant as ever.

With text drawn in part from court transcripts, this complex, multilayered piece of theater chronicles the case of Matthew Shepard, the gay University of Wyoming student whose 1998 murder paved the way for passage of federal hate crimes legislation. But the play also dramatizes the experience of its creators, playwright Moisés Kaufman and members of his Tectonic Theater Project, who traveled to Laramie, Wyoming, after Shepard's death to interview residents of the traumatized town.

Originally performed in 2000 by the Tectonic ensemble, the play now demands that its cast do



You Can't Take It With You JHENAI MOOTZ





The Tempel Lipizzans © JOHN BORYS PHOTOGRAPHY

about the weather until one woman revealed she was on the hunt for a murderer, and the trio eventually set off on a road trip to catch the killer. They never made it to their destination, though they did hike into tangents—all the while standing and talking, modifying their physicality only to sit. As the single scene dragged, so did the comic timing.

Wet Bus traveled faster, its tight cast pouncing on recurring jokes and characters with aplomb. In a scene taking place on a mountainside, two men carried each other until one lost an arm. The lobby of a doctor's office transformed into a gathering place for recurring characters, including the aforementioned armless men. When a cast member delivered a tossed-off line, the rest of the crew was quick to point it out. When one of the dudes mansplained what a period is, the females in the group immediately mocked his naivete and then later demanded he continue his misguided explanation.

In less time, Wet Bus covered more ground than Alterboyz. Many limbs were shed, but the murderer is still at large. —**STEVE HEISLER** *OH HELL YEAH* Fri 10:30 PM, iO Theater, 1501 N. Kingsbury, 312-929-2401, ioimprov.com, \$14.

## RR Real hoofers

The Tempel Lipizzans show off their mastery of equine ballet.

Showbiz ain't easy. Come hell or high water or 90-degree temperatures and biting flies, the show must go on—and smile, damn it. The Lipizzan horses at Tempel Farms up near the Wisconsin border are troupers of the old school. On a recent disgustingly hot afternoon when any horse with any sense would rather be hidden away in a shady stable with a nice trough of water doing the equine equivalent of Netflix and chill, the Tempel Lipizzans were out in the blazing sun performing the same precision maneuvers their ancestors did in imperial Vienna 400 years ago.

Lipizzans are big and white—they look like paint-

ings of unicorns, minus the horn—and known for their strength, spirit, and intelligence. Seventy horses live at Tempel Farms, and the show demonstrates all the stages of their training, from the adorably undisciplined brown foals who trot around the ring after their mothers (they turn white as they get older) to the full-grown stallions who dance and leap in formation.

The Tempel Farms show is a soothing experience. Like classical ballet, the trick is to make completely unnatural movements appear effortless. (No Lipizzans were harmed in the name of art; their training consists of positive reinforcement and lots of sugar cubes.) The best part is that afterward, you can tour the stables and meet the horses and their riders. Conversano (Mima) Anita, aka Cookie, is an especially charming host; if you've been waiting since you were seven years old to be nuzzled by a horse, now is your opportunity. —**AIMEE LEVITT** *TEMPEL LIPIZZANS* Through 9/2: dates and times vary, see website, Tempel Farms, 17000 Wadsworth Rd., Old Mill Creek, 847-244-5330, tempelfarms.com, \$32, \$22 veterans and children, \$75 VIP.

## Man eaters

*Wild Women of Planet Wongo* lacks the verve of a true camp classic.

Not Too Fancy Productions brings this musical comedy to Chicago after previous runs in Brooklyn and Manhattan. Written by Ben Budick, Steve Mackes, and Dave Ogrin, *Wild Women of Planet Wongo* takes up two spaces in the Chopin basement: a bar/lounge area where Wongotinis are served and game shows are played and a standing-room-only space where the plot plays out.

After a crash, astronauts Ric and Louie find themselves marooned on all-female Planet Wongo, known for its population of warrior wonder women. The men think they're in for some sexual gratification after years of space loneliness, but the women are secretly plotting to barbecue them at the next Wongo Woo-au. A variety of escape antics ensue, culminating in the discovery of a

nearly fatal typo in Wongo's holy book.

While the script is an appropriate send-up of B movies past, this production falls short. The frequent shifting of attention between performance spaces and downtime for bathroom breaks and drinks don't allow the performance energy to build; they actually foster the opposite of the intended "immersive" experience. Additionally, the direction and cast performances lack the vitality necessary to create the world of Wongo and ensure the jokes get laughs. The actors' voices are capable and their improvised asides clever, but punch lines feel thrown away, without the campiness necessary for a truly successful parody. The same goes for the movement and dance numbers, which could be much bigger with even more audience interaction. After all, people need a warm-up if they're expected to participate in the postshow dance party. —**MARISSA OBERLANDER** *WILD WOMEN OF PLANET WONGO* Through 7/14: Thu-Fri 8 PM, Sat 7:30 and 10 PM, Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division, 773-769-3832, planetwongo.com, \$40, \$20 30 and under.

## RR Old dog, new tricks

Oak Park Festival Theatre uncovers hidden depths in *You Can't Take It With You*.

There are probably safer plays in the American theater canon than George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart's Pulitzer Prize-winning chestnut about a family of eccentrics who do their thing while the rest of the

world toils in quiet desperation—but I can't think of any. First produced in 1936, in the middle of the Great Depression, the play is almost entirely shadow free: no money worries, no personal problems. Even the White Russian refugees fleeing Stalinist terror are happy. The only flies in the ointment are sweet Alice Sycamores, rich boyfriend's muggle parents and those annoying government guys (the IRS in the first act, the FBI in the second). Still, the play holds up well, thanks in part to Kaufman and Hart's witty dialogue, their cliché-free characters, and a plot that, by the standards of the time, isn't too creaky or drawn out.

In Oak Park Festival Theatre's current production, director Jason Gerace focuses on character development, not punch lines. This is good thing since most of Kaufman and Hart's topical humor needs extensive annotation. Gerace and his cast of able comic actors even discover some new tricks for this 82-year-old warhorse. Most impressive are the moments of sweet Chekhovian melancholy they manage to find from time to time in the material. Jack Hickey in particular brings a touching wistful air to his performance as the family's eccentric, carefree patriarch. These moments deepen the play and raise the stakes, though not for long, since they are quickly overwhelmed by the play's very pre-WWII American need for a happy ending. —**JACK HELBIG** *YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU* Through 7/22: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 7 PM, Austin Gardens, 167 Forest Ave., Oak Park, 708-300-9396, oakparkfestival.com, \$32, \$27 seniors, \$15 students. **A**

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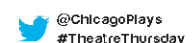
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Trevor Jackson and Lex Scott Davis in *Superfly*

## MOVIES

# Crack panther

The new *Superfly* rolls back the clock on African-American movie heroes.

By J.R. JONES

*This review contains spoilers.*

**S***uperfly* appears to be superflopping. Released last Wednesday on 2,220 screens nationwide, the Columbia Pictures remake of the 1972 blaxploitation favorite has grossed only \$9.8 million to date, a dismal figure for such a wide opening. Industry analysts must be wondering whether the titanic commercial success earlier this year of Disney's African-themed *Black Panther*—which grossed \$292 million in its opening week and now ranks as the fourth-biggest moneymaker of all time at \$1.3 billion worldwide—was only a fluke. But

anyone comparing the two movies based on the color of their skin overlooks the content of their character: *Black Panther* offers up a noble comic-book superhero with a proud African lineage, whereas *Superfly* tells the story of a decadent cocaine dealer who manages to beat all the odds.

Ironically the original *Super Fly*, released by Warner Bros., played as pivotal a role in the African-American cinema of the 1970s as *Black Panther* seems to be playing in the modern movie landscape. One of the biggest box-office hits of the blaxploitation era, *Super Fly* followed in the footsteps of MGM's *Shaft* (1971) with its strong, resourceful black pro-

tagonist, the well-coiffed Youngblood Priest. But the movie also provoked a giant backlash from the middle-class black community, who were incensed by its ghetto stereotypes and glamorization of the drug economy. According to legend, the very term *blaxploitation* was coined specifically to denigrate *Super Fly*. Now that *Black Panther* has exceeded the wildest commercial dreams of those earlier filmmakers, the new *Superfly* seems even more like an embarrassing throwback.

To comprehend the excitement generated by those first blaxploitation releases, one has to consider the blinding whiteness of American cinema in the postwar years, after the

black-oriented "race films" of the silent and early sound eras had died out. Aside from the elegant Sidney Poitier, blacks were nearly invisible in Hollywood movies during the 1950s and early '60s, and stories authentic to the black experience were unheard of. That began to change in the late '60s as the MPAA's new ratings system permitted more adult themes in mainstream movies and the studios, unable to fill the big urban movie houses anymore because of white flight to the suburbs, began to slash production costs and focus more on distributing independent productions. Released by United Artists, Ossie Davis's surprise hit *Cotton Comes to Harlem* (1970) combined the two elements that would come to define blaxploitation: strong black characters and ample location shooting in the urban ghettos that had always been hidden from American moviegoers.

*Shaft* (1971), starring Richard Roundtree and directed by the great photographer and filmmaker Gordon Parks, more or less created the modern African-American screen hero—a man of action, cool, smart, and virile. "We were trying to emulate . . . what white movie stars we admired were doing," remembered actor Ron O'Neal, who played Priest in *Super Fly*. "Charles Bronson, Clint Eastwood, Burt Reynolds. . . . We were trying to show a mature, intelligent black man, operating with all the panache and verve of James Bond." Yet *Super Fly*, directed by the 38-year-old Gordon Parks Jr., turns this endeavor into a giant provocation. Priest first appears onscreen in bed with a rich white woman who buys coke from him; one outrageous composition shows, in the right background, the nude woman lounging in rumpled sheets and, in the left foreground, a close-up profile of Priest's crotch, his ample package visible through his shorts.

To be fair, Priest is a more ambiguous character than either O'Neal or the movie's



detractors might admit. He wants out of the drug business, and the movie follows his efforts to buy 30 kilos, turn them into a million dollars, and retire. "This is a chance, and I want to take it now," he tells his partner, Eddie. "Before I have to kill somebody. Before somebody ices me." Eddie can't believe that Priest wants to leave it all behind: "Eight-track stereo, color TV in every room, and can snort a half a piece of dope every day. That's the American dream!" He seems to know Priest better than anyone else, and his friendly counsel of defeat is the movie's most troubling moment. "You got this fantasy in your head about gettin' out of the life and settin' that other world on its ear. What the fuck are you gonna do except hustle? Maybe this is what you supposed to do, this is what you grown to do."

With a sweet, melodramatic soul score by Curtis Mayfield, *Super Fly* became a monster hit, playing for weeks in the nation's urban grindhouses (here in Chicago, it screened at the notorious Woods Theatre at Randolph and Dearborn). But the movie was condemned by the NAACP, Operation PUSH, and the Congress of Racial Equality. Conservative TV host Tony Brown called out blaxploitation artists as "race traitors." According to O'Neal, the term blaxploitation was coined not by white journalists but by Junius Griffin, a black press agent in Hollywood who had lost the *Super Fly* account but won a gig from 20th Century Fox representing its wholesome family drama *Sounder*. "He was very tight with Johnson Publications, and that's where the term was popularized, through *Ebony* and *Jet Magazine*," O'Neal claimed. "To the utter damnation of all black films, and black artists, and hopefully to himself, as far as I'm concerned."

Alarmed by this outcry, the Hollywood studios began backing away from blaxploitation films, though what really killed the genre, along with the whole "New Hollywood" movement of the early 70s, was the blockbuster era initiated by *Jaws* (1975), *Star Wars* (1977), and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). Movies like these appealed to black and white audiences alike and eventually turned the business into a clash of the titans, with smaller films of every variety squeezed out by giant movies with giant marketing campaigns. The 1980s and '90s brought Spike Lee and a handful of other independents, but in the brave new world of global entertainment franchises, the prevailing wisdom in Hollywood has always

been that "black films don't travel"—until *Black Panther*, which made almost as much money overseas as it did in the U.S. Sadly, Ron O'Neal died in 2009 and never got to see Chadwick Boseman as the regal T'Challa of *Black Panther*, operating with all the panache and verve of James Bond.

So where does that leave the new *Superfly*? Coproduced by the rapper Future and directed by Director X (aka Julien Christian Lutz), the remake runs nearly a half hour longer than the original and moves the action from Harlem to modern-day Atlanta, where the dapper Priest (Trevor Jackson), who's built up a crew of 50 people, competes with another local drug operation called the Snow Patrol. (In their diamonds and white furs, they seem to be a takeoff on the flamboyant Black Mafia Family that ruled Atlanta's cocaine trade in the 90s; for more on this story see the true-crime book *BMF* by former *Reader* editor Mara Shalhoup.) True to the blaxploitation tradition, the filmmakers include plenty of location shooting (in the film's funniest shot, a car chase through a public park ends with the bad guy wiping out against a Confederate monument). But Priest's big drug deal also takes him over the border to deal with the fearsome kingpin of a Mexican cartel (Esai Morales).

Priest is the same debonair character O'Neal played in 1972—a stylish dresser, a skilled martial artist, a consummate ladies' man—but of course the leather-clad street dealer is a fairly mundane figure now that stories of the international drug trade are ubiquitous in movies and on TV. (Bored with this film? Next week brings *Sicario: Day of the Soldado*.) Priest's philosophical debate with Eddie has been eliminated, though echoes of it reverberate through the hero's amoral voice-over narration. By the end of the movie, Priest has triumphed over the Mexican drug lord, the Snow Patrol, and a pair of corrupt Atlanta police detectives, mainly by ratting them out to other parties; the last shot, indulging one of the movies' hoariest clichés, shows him and his lover Georgia (Lex Scott Davis) sipping cocktails on their yacht off the coast of Montenegro. "Yeah, I left America," Priest concludes on the soundtrack. "And I took the dream with me." Black films do travel, we've learned, only some of them travel downward. **A**

**SUPERFLY ★★** Directed by Director X. R, 116 min. For listings visit [chicagoreader.com/movies](http://chicagoreader.com/movies).

🐦 @JR\_Jones



Izzy Gets the F\*ck Across Town

## MOVIES

### NEW REVIEWS

#### Ava

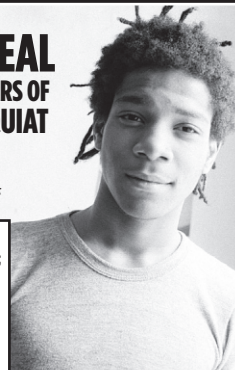
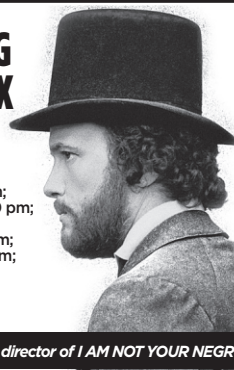
In this debut feature from Iranian writer-director Sadaf Foroughi, an insightful 16-year-old in Tehran rebels against her controlling mother and the principal of her strict all-girl high school. Mahour Jabbari is fierce and believable as the title character, who'd like to pursue music and casually date boys; when Ava's mother learns that Ava hung out with a boy in a park, she takes her daughter to a doctor to confirm that she's still a virgin. Meanwhile, Ava's sanctimonious principal encourages students to rat each other out for impropriety, a pattern Ava sees play out in the older generation when her mother lambastes her best friend's mother for leaving her husband. Foroughi's visual storytelling is impressive: unconventional angles position Ava at the edge of the frame or partially obscure her and the figures around her, accentuating the character's feelings of ostracism, though she moves closer to the frame's center as her confidence grows. In Persian with subtitles. —**LEAH PICKETT** 102 min. Fri 6/22–Thu 6/28. *Facets Cinematheque*.

## Boom for Real: The Late Teenage Years of Jean-Michel Basquiat

This slender documentary by Sarah Driver isn't so much a biography of artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, who died at age 27 in 1988, as a memoir of the New York art scene in the 1970s and '80s, woven by veterans who are proud to have known and (mostly) liked the shy but cocky teen before he was famous. Because Basquiat started as a graffiti artist, many of his earliest works were destroyed, so the rare photos here, provided by his friend Alexis Adler, are illuminating. But for a more vibrant portrait of the artist, who helped revive painting when the medium was widely considered defunct, look to Tamra Davis's *Jean-Michel Basquiat: The Radiant Child* (2010). —**ANDREA GRONVALL** 78 min. Fri 6/22, 4:15 and 6:15 PM; Sat 6/23, 7:45 PM; Sun 6/24, 5 PM; Mon 6/25, 6 PM; Tue 6/26, 8 PM; Wed 6/27, 8 PM; and Thu 6/28, 8:15 PM. *Gene Siskel Film Center*.

## Izzy Gets the F\*ck Across Town

The title character, a washed-up indie songbird in Los Angeles, awakes in bed with a strange man and pulls on a bloodied caterer's tuxedo from the night before; he never did figure out what all that was about, but in ➔

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# ARTS & CULTURE



Mrs. Hyde

any case this indie comedy keeps hurtling forward once Izzy learns by cell phone about her ex-boyfriend's engagement party that evening, resolves to crash it, and tries to get from Santa Monica to Los Feliz in five hours without a dime to her name. Mackenzie Davis (*Tully*, AMC's *Halt and Catch Fire*) produced, stars, and gives an exhilarating, ultimately exhausting tour de force performance as Izzy; director Christian Papierniak focuses on the actress so intently that after a while she seems to be working in front of a mirror. With Lakeith Stanfield, Carrie Coon, Annie Potts, Alia Skawkat, and Joel Haley Osment. —J.R. JONES 86 min. *River East* 21.

## Mrs. Hyde

Isabelle Huppert stars as a cold, awkward high school teacher, mocked by her students and disliked by her colleagues, who gets a jolt of electricity from a scientific experiment and begins prowling around after dark, zapping people. The credits for this French horror comedy cite Robert Louis Stevenson as inspiration, but the more direct antecedent is Jerry Lewis's *The Nutty Professor*. One can easily imagine Huppert throwing caution to the wind with coke-bottle glasses and false teeth, but writer-director Serge Bozon is too decorous for that, focusing instead on a wan subplot in which the electrified teacher bonds with the disabled Arab student (Adda Senani) who's been tormenting her in class. With Romain Duris and José Garcia. In French with subtitles. —J.R. JONES 95 min. *Fri* 6/22, 4 PM; *Sat* 6/23, 5:15 PM; and *Tue* 6/26, 6 PM. *Gene Siskel Film Center*.

## Tag

Inspired by a *Wall Street Journal* story, this fast-moving comedy stars Ed Helms, Jon Hamm, Jeremy Renner, Hannibal Buress, and Jake Johnson as middle-aged men who've been playing the same game of tag, confined to the month of May, since they were nine years old. This premise gives the stars' stunt doubles plenty to do, and the slapstick gains a lightly satirical edge from the casting of action badass Renner (*The Bourne Legacy*) as the only member of the group who's never been tagged. Unlike the stunt doubles, the women in the cast don't have much to do except to inject some estrogen into this tale of overgrown boys; Isla Fisher brings her usual ginger to a one-note role as the Helms character's hypercompetitive spouse, but Rashida Jones's part, as a former high school honey once courted by two of the men, consists mainly of a few sexy dresses. Director Jeff Tomsic takes a broadly comic approach to the material that doesn't always serve it well, but the real-life story is captivating, at

once poignant and ridiculous. —J.R. JONES *R*, 100 min. *Century 12* and *CineArts 6*, *Chatham 14*, *Cicero Showplace 14*, *Ford City, Lake, Logan, Webster Place*.

## The Young Karl Marx

Haitian filmmaker Raoul Peck, emboldened by his success at bringing James Baldwin's prose to life with the documentary *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016), tackles a more difficult literary endeavor: dramatizing the life experiences that drove Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to write the Communist Manifesto in 1848. This intelligent biopic touches on the men's marriages but focuses mainly on the various radical constituencies across Europe that they hoped to unite with a powerful philosophical statement. August Diehl, best known here for his small role in *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), invests the twentysomething Marx with a quick mind and a feverish impatience that propel the narrative forward, his energy a real asset to a film that trades heavily in ideas. "Criticism devours everything that exists, and when nothing is left, it devours itself," the German radical Wilhelm Weitling tells Marx—and yet Peck dares to frame his movie as an intellectual adventure. In English and subtitled French and German. —J.R. JONES 114 min. *Fri* 6/22, 2 and 6 PM; *Sat* 6/23, 3 and 7:30 PM; *Sun* 6/24, 5 PM; *Mon* 6/25, 7:45 PM; *Wed* 6/27, 7:45 PM; and *Thu* 6/28, 6 PM. *Gene Siskel Film Center*.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

## Cinepocalypse

The second annual Cinepocalypse festival collects new horror, science fiction, and fantasy films. Among the several retrospective screenings are a 70-millimeter presentation of *Howard the Duck* (1986); two films by the noted cinematographer (*Do the Right Thing*, *Malcolm X*) and director Ernest Dickerson, who will attend; and the cult thriller *Bound* (1996), with codirector Lana Wachowski in person. *For a full schedule visit musicboxtheatre.com; for Ben Sachs's interview with Dickerson, posting June 22, visit chicagoreader.com/movies. Thu* 6/21-Thu 6/28. *Music Box*.

## Secrets of Nature

Short works on nature themes (1951-'92) from the Chicago Film Archives' collection. Included are works by former Chicago-area filmmakers JoAnn Elam, Millie Goldsholl, Don Klugman, and Julian Gromer. 72 min. *Sat* 6/23, 8 PM. *Chicago Filmmakers*. *FI*





# Building bikes and community

Blackstone Bicycle Works teaches Woodlawn kids how to become mechanics—and leaders.

**Story and photos by**  
**SEBASTIÁN HIDALGO**

**C**hildren in color-coded aprons stream in and out of a building on a backstreet in Woodlawn. It's 3 PM on a recent weekday afternoon at Blackstone Bicycle Works, which is filled with the sounds of tools hitting aluminum and enthusiastic children working on bikes. The community-oriented shop at 6100 S. Blackstone is training roughly 175 students between the ages of eight and 18 this year in a program that not only teaches them bike mechanics and customer service skills but also offers a safe space where they can grow and become leaders.

Aaliyah Epting of Woodlawn, who's 14, wears a red apron as she hangs out in the homework room. The program is similar to martial arts in that kids earn different-colored aprons based on their mastery of skills. Aaliyah, who just graduated from Carnegie Elementary and has trained at Blackstone for just under a year, has mastered three of the five tiers and now has moved to the internship level. To earn her red apron she put in hours in each of five areas: academics, leadership, art, food prep, and bike mechanics.

As part of her internship, Aaliyah helps out around the shop, including putting her new bike-repair skills to the test.

One of her proudest moments came during a ride last year when a Blackstone employee "asked me to lead [while] we were in the middle of the route. I thought I was in trouble at first," she says now. She took over and has led rides since. "It got really fun for me," she said.

She hopes to become the fourth young woman to achieve the black apron that signals the "master mechanic" level. She's encouraged by her instructors, who say she's a quick learner with impressive leadership abilities. "They noticed something different in me," she says proudly. **[E]**

@sebastian\_hwc

# The Bike Issue

## Divvy at five: Chicago's bike share is better than ever

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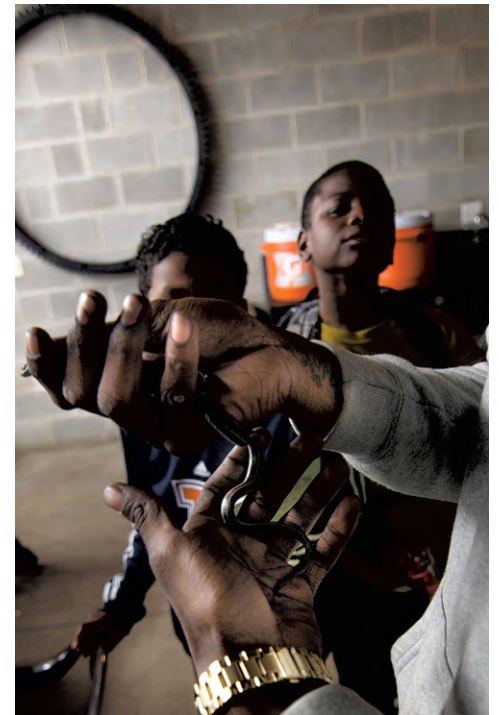
OK, I occasionally wear them. But they take the joy out of riding.

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Christopher Epting (left) sweeps and Tia Brogsdale (right) practices taking apart a bicycle. At the end of every day, program participants clean and organize the shop.



A Blackstone volunteer shows a garter snake he caught on his way to the shop.



Trainees and a volunteer work on fixing an air leak.

Volunteer Nana checks out the kitchen area.





Lawrence Slack leads a game of Wax Museum, Blackstone's version of Red Light, Green Light, during free time at the shop, earned by working and doing homework.



Slack prepares to join the Friday bike ride.



A Blackstone staffer inspects a customer's bike in the courtyard.



A student peeks into a storage trailer where recycled bike parts are stored.





A quick nap  
during free time



The weekly  
ride



# Divvy at five: Better than ever

The city's bike-share system is top-notch—too bad the ubiquitous bikes are so ugly.

By RYAN SMITH



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**P**icture James Dean riding a Divvy bike instead of a motorcycle. You can't without snickering, can you? That's because I, you, and every other human being on earth looks dorky in the clunky-ass saddle of one. The powder-blue cruisers were designed to evoke Chicago's starry flag. But they're more like the dad jeans of bicycles—which is ironic considering the pretty cool origins of the community bike-share program.

In the mid-60s, a group of artsy Dutch anarchists called Provo wanted to rage against the machine. Actually, machines. The automobile dominated city streets, and Provo saw this as a massive problem leading to more congestion, pollution, and hyperconsumerism. The group responded by proposing some avant-garde policy measures—one of them the so-called Witte Fietsenplan ("white bicycle plan").

The 1965 scheme was sort of a guerrilla art installation. Provo painted 50 used bikes white, parked them unlocked in spots all over Amsterdam, and declared in a pamphlet that the fleet "symbolise[d] simplicity and hygiene as opposed to the gaudiness and filth of the authoritarian car." This improvised bike share didn't last long, however—Dutch police quickly impounded the ghost-colored cycles.

Two years later, Provo pitched a more serious plan. A group member who'd been elected to Amsterdam's city council pushed an ambitious ordinance that would have banned all motorized traffic in central Amsterdam save some electric-powered taxis. Instead of zipping around in cars, the public would have access to 10,000 government-funded white bikes that would remain unlocked at all times.

But the city council rejected the plan, saying that "the bicycle belongs to the past."

Now, 50 years after the Witte Fietsenplan, bike-sharing systems have set up shop in global cities including London, Paris, New York City, and Chicago. According to a report by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, Americans took 35 million bike-share trips in 2017, up 25 percent from the previous year. Bike sharing no longer represents a fringe protest movement against car culture but an essential part of many cities' transportation infrastructure.

And that's excellent news, even if most bike share programs don't quite meet the utopian ideal Provo had in mind.

Just take Divvy, which is celebrating its fifth anniversary this month. Chicago's big blue bikes may be ugly, but their beauty lies in their utility—even if it didn't start out that way. The bike-sharing program was the brainchild of Mayor Richard Daley, who took a fancy to Paris's 14,000-bike strong Velib system on a trip to the French capital in 2007 and believed it could be duplicated here. Chicago's Department of Transportation started rolling out Divvy in the summer of 2013 during the equally bike-friendly Rahm Emanuel administration at a cost of nearly \$28 million—mostly covered by federal funds.

Many Chicagoans justifiably made noise about the hefty price tag for a service that felt woefully underinflated. Plus, the process of checking out a bike was cumbersome, the mobile app was an eyesore, and the 30-minute time span before the bikes had to be returned to a dock was frustratingly short. To top it off, Divvy launched with only 750 bikes and 75

stations—most of them concentrated near the Loop and the near north side. Their distribution reinforced the perception that Divvy was more a two-wheeled toy for tourists than a serious public transportation option for locals.

That's what I believed too, but I purchased a \$75 yearly membership at the beginning of 2014 after the city put a dock a few steps from the door of my apartment complex in east Pilsen. For the first couple of years, I checked out Divvy bikes almost exclusively as a way to get from my apartment to Blue and Red Line stops that were just out of reasonable walking distance.

My enthusiasm for Divvy remained muted because I kept having nagging technical difficulties and frustrating incidents—like the time I couldn't park my bike in a two-mile radius in the Loop because eight nearby docks were full. I remember wondering if I'd catch frostbite one snowy January day while on the phone with a Divvy agent who was supposed to tell me what to do with a station so encrusted with ice that it was inoperable. Sometimes I felt like I was eternally doomed to check out bikes hampered by broken seats, crooked handlebars, or busted bells.

I still run into occasional hiccups, but the truth is that Divvy has evolved over the last half decade, and almost every change to the program has been positive. The fleet has expanded to nearly 6,000 bikes at 580 stations across the city (though many neighborhoods are still lacking in stations). Even better, at the start of 2018 the maximum trip time was extended to 45 minutes, which makes Divvy much more viable for longer rides.

Meanwhile, the Divvy-compatible Transit App has become my go-to method for deciding

how exactly I will travel to a destination. Type an address into the app and you're presented with a list of options—bus, train, walking, biking, car, even Uber. It's striking how often Divvy makes the most sense—especially when you consider the amount of money you can save and the exercise you get in return for pedaling the beasts.

I've taken 225 Divvy rides so far in 2018—1,700 since 2013—and it's cost me about 48 cents a ride when taking into account the \$99 annual membership dues and a couple of \$4 late fees. That puts me in the top 5 percent of users; the average cost per ride for the system's 37,000 members is \$1. When I compare my costs to what I would have spent on the CTA or on a ride share such as Uber or Lyft, it's a steal.

It's true I could save even more cash by relying on the commuter-style bike I already own. But with Divvy, I don't have to sweat getting my stuff ripped off or constantly haul my bike up two flights of stairs to my apartment. I still take occasional rides on my own bike, but Divvy has increasingly become my number one way of navigating the city.

In other words, Divvy has made my life a bit easier and better. I just wish I could say the same about its overall impact on quality of life in the city. Daley hoped Divvy would help relieve traffic congestion and curb air pollution, but research has shown that bike-sharing rides only have a marginal impact on congestion. That's because they typically replace journeys made on foot or using public transportation, not car trips.

The real winners of the transportation-sharing game of the last five years haven't been Divvy but Uber and Lyft (both of which are reportedly bidding on Divvy's operator, Motivate). As a result, motorized vehicles still rule Chicago's streets, and traffic remains a hellish snarl at rush hour.

It's not too late to change that. After their failed attempts to launch bike share a half century ago, Provo and other pro-cycling groups eventually were able to convince Dutch politicians that maybe the car wasn't the future after all. More bike-friendly policies and better urban planning followed—and after dipping to 20 percent in the early 70s, cycling trips now make up 48 percent of all trips in Amsterdam's urban core.

Perhaps if Chicago continues to improve its cycling infrastructure—which includes Divvy and a new batch of dockless bike-sharing programs—we can vastly improve on the still paltry 1.7 percent of locals who commuted to work on a bike in 2016.

Personally, I'd start with a Divvy makeover. 

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## Bike events

**Bike to Work Challenge** The annual Bike to Work event now spans two weeks, rewarding commuters for putting down the Ventra card or the car keys and picking up a helmet and U-lock. Prizes will be awarded; more information can be found at [bikecommuterchallenge.org](http://bikecommuterchallenge.org). *Fri 6/15-Fri 6/29, kick-off Thu 6/21, 5 PM, Daley Plaza, 50 W. Washington, 312-346-3278.*

**Chicago Bike Week Rally** Learn more about our bike map from its creator, John Greenfield—who guides cyclists through some of his preferred routes. *Wed 6/27, 6 PM, Daley Plaza, 50 W. Washington, 312-346-3278, [thedaleycenter.com](http://thedaleycenter.com).*

**Chicago's Mellowest Bike Tour** This year Chicago Bike Week begins in a beer garden. Cycle over to the Daley Center and chill with a drink from Revolution Brewing. Imbibe and pedal wisely. Presented by Freeman Kevnides Law Firm. *Thu 6/21, 5-7 PM, Daley Plaza, 50 W. Washington, 312-346-3278, [thedaleycenter.com](http://thedaleycenter.com).*

**Critical Mass** At this monthly group ride, bikes of all shapes and sizes join forces and stop traffic via . . . critical mass. Camaraderie is encouraged; old-timey bikes are a given. *Fri 6/29, 6-11 PM, Daley Plaza, 50 W. Washington, 312-346-3278, [thedaleycenter.com](http://thedaleycenter.com).*

**Dare2tri Tandem Bike Training** Grab a buddy and hop on a bicycle built for two. Dare2tri, an organization that organizes outings for folks with physical disabilities, offers training on how to ride tandem, plus information about volunteering. Arrive promptly at 10 AM. *Sat 6/30, 10 AM-noon, Wilson at Lake Shore Dr.*

**Illinois Beach State Park Bike Adventure** Experience an overnight stay at the Illinois Beach State Park, located north of the city along Lake Michigan near Zion. Of course, you'll arrive via bike, and along the way guides will point out the sights and scenery of northeast Illinois. Participants return by train, and there's an option to spring for a hotel if sleeping in nature isn't your thing. Campfire included. *Sat 6/30, 7 AM-Sun 7/1, 6-11 PM, Buckingham Fountain, 500 S. Columbus, 312-555-1212, \$80.*

**Louis Sullivan Architecture Tour** This guided bike tour heads from the north side down to the Loop, with many stops along the way to admire Louis Sullivan's work. RSVP is required; visit [chicagocyclingclub.org](http://chicagocyclingclub.org) to sign up and learn the starting location. *Sun 6/24, 9 AM-2 PM, location TBA. **FREE***

**Pothole Art Bike Tour** Cruise around Edgewater scoping out potholes that have been decorated by artist Jim Bachor—described by the website the Chainlink as “stunning and sometimes snarky mosaic works.” The entry fee includes a sticker designed by Bachor. *Sun 7/1, 9 AM-5 PM, Broadway and Thorndale, \$25.*

**Tour de Fat** Prepare your bike for a parade! The annual Tour de Fat offers beers, live music by Best Coast, and camaraderie among fellow bike enthusiasts. Beer proceeds benefit West Town Bikes. *Sat 6/30, 10 AM-5 PM, ride begins at 11 AM, Humboldt Park, 1440 N. Sacramento, 312-742-7549, [newbelgium.com](http://newbelgium.com), \$15.*

**Women and Trans Night** BYO bike project to West Town Bikes Wednesday nights, when only women and trans individuals are allowed. Instructors are on hand to assist with everything from brake adjustments to larger-scale repairs. Attendees are encouraged to bring snacks and drinks. *Wednesdays 7-10 PM, West Town Bikes, 2459 W. Division, [westtownbikes.org](http://westtownbikes.org), \$10 an hour. **BT***



# Beer pedaler

Northwest Indiana is a great place to ride, and its two dozen breweries offer plenty of refreshment.

By **JULIA THIEL**

Indiana is a long way to go for a beer—especially with the proliferation of craft breweries in Chicago. But sometimes, as the old saying goes, it's about the journey rather than the destination (OK, if the destination involves beer and food, it's about that too).

The thousands of cyclists who make the trek to **THREE FLOYDS BREWING CO.** in Munster every year are definitely onto something: the bike ride to northwest Indiana is lovely, and the addition of new bike paths over the last few years has made it much easier to get there than it used to be. So has the South Shore Line's decision to allow bikes on some train runs. But most Chicagoans don't seem to realize that there's more to the area than Three Floyds, where the beer is undeniably top-notch but the wait for a table can stretch to two hours or more on weekends. Northwest Indiana (known as "the Region" or sometimes "Da Region") is now home to more than 20 breweries, and some are even closer than Three Floyds.

So how far do you have to bike to get to them? From downtown it's about 20 to 30 miles one way, depending on where you're headed. Thanks to some new bike paths, you can now get all the way to Hammond almost entirely on paved trails. From the south end of the Lakefront Trail you take South Shore Drive to South Lake Shore Drive (which both have bike lanes), go left on Ewing, then through Calumet Park. That takes you to the beginning of the Burnham Greenway, a rails-to-trails conversion that goes to Eggers Grove, where you can connect to a trail around Wolf Lake.

Just a mile east of the lake is **BULLDOG BREWERY** in Whiting, a picturesque town that during one of my visits last summer was playing oldies through speakers mounted to buildings along the main drag. Maybe it was the music, but the experience was oddly surreal, as if we'd time-traveled back to a small town in the 1960s. There's nothing surreal, though, about the brewpub, a friendly, homey spot with a small beer garden and an extensive menu of sandwiches, burgers, flatbreads, and entrees like fish-and-chips. The beers are similarly classic styles like lager, IPA, and brown ale.

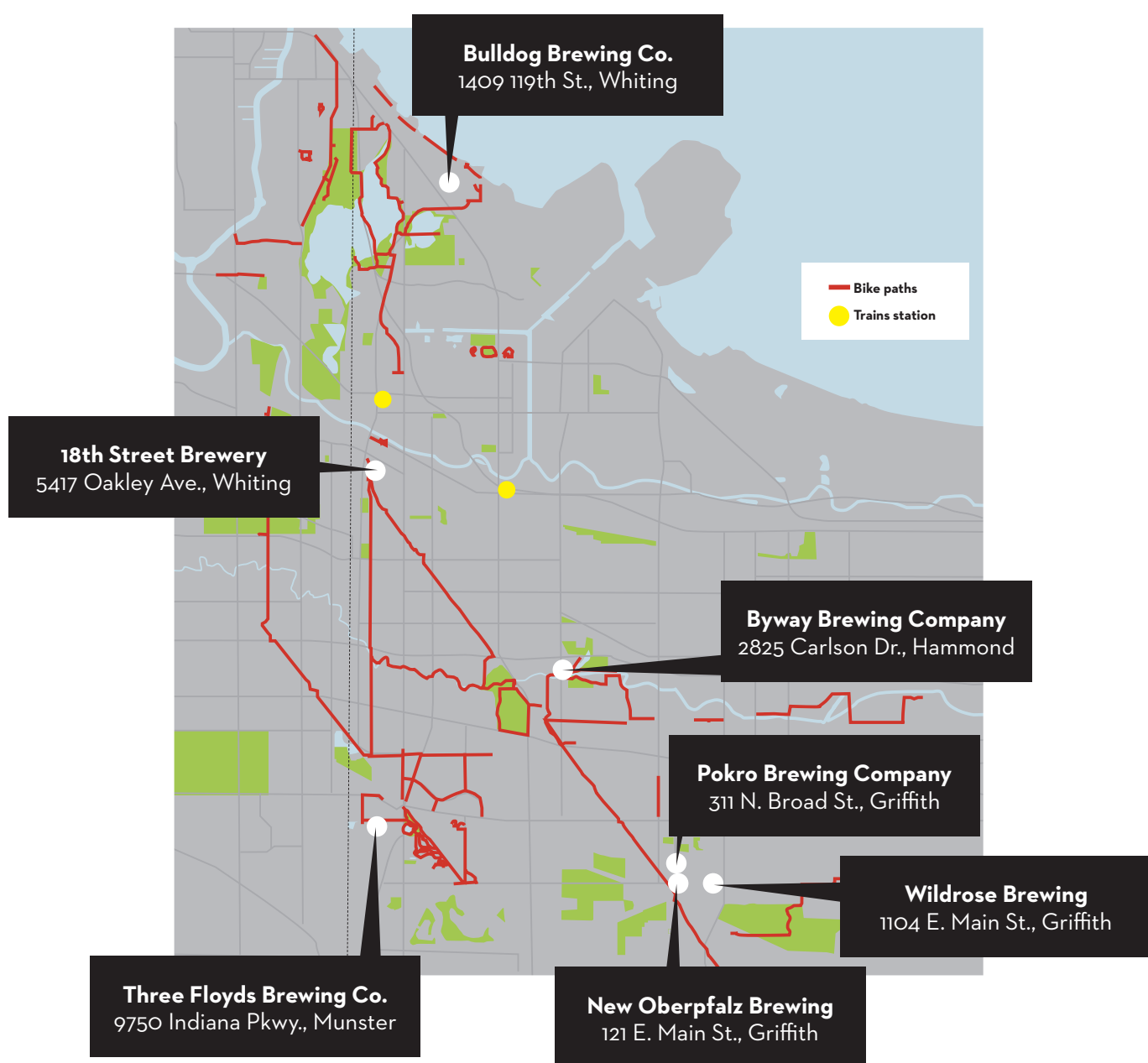
About four miles south of Wolf Lake on the Marquette Greenway (a bike path that runs parallel to Sheffield Avenue) and then Johnson, a relatively quiet street, you'll hit **18TH STREET BREWERY's** Hammond brewpub. It's one of my favorite destinations, partly because the Hammond train station is just a ten-minute ride

away, but also because of the excellent beer and food and the spacious patio. Beers from 18th Street are in such high demand that they're often hard to come by in Chicago, so going to the source is your best bet. The food menu isn't very extensive, but on my half-dozen visits I've never been disappointed by anything I've eaten there, and service is extremely friendly.

The Erie Lackawanna Trail, a half block west of 18th Street, continues ten miles southwest to Griffith, Indiana, a small town with three brewpubs in less than a half-mile radius (all opened in early 2015). On a recent visit we started with pierogis and half pints at **POKRO BREWING COMPANY**, which specializes in Belgian, English, and Polish beers. They're all available in seven-ounce pours (OK, technically one ounce less than a half pint), which is useful when you're planning to hit all the breweries in town. It's a big place, but it's di-

vided up into smaller rooms (each with its own stash of board games) and still manages to feel cozy. The comforting Polish food helps as well; the menu is limited, but when you serve good pierogis you don't need much else (they're half price on Sundays).

Just a couple blocks south of Pokro is **NEW OBERPFALZ BREWING**, which focuses on German styles of beer. The food is American, mostly: we had an excellent cheeseburger (also available with a vegan Beyond Burger patty) with a side of Thai-roasted cauliflower and chile-garlic peanut sauce. You can get four-ounce tasters of any beer, but there's something very satisfying about a half-liter tankard; I'd recommend the schwarzbier, which is slightly lower in alcohol than most of the other beers (and also very good). Heading east on Main Street will take you to **WILDROSE BREWING COMPANY**, located in an old pole barn where the space under ➔





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Wolf Lake Bike Trail and Boardwalk in Hammond

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a large awning functions as a spacious patio with picnic tables. It's classic bar food—cheese curds, giant pretzels, and sandwiches—and while the beer menu is heavy on pale ales, there are a few malty options as well. On a hot day the Stewheatcolada, a wheat ale with pineapple and coconut, was refreshing and not too sweet.

Riding back northwest on the Erie Lackawanna Trail, if you're feeling parched after about five miles, you're in luck: **BYWAY BREWING COMPANY** is just off the trail in the southeast corner of Hammond. It's larger than most of the other brewpubs in both size and scope, with soaring ceilings and a patio that seats nearly 100, plus a menu that features not just sandwiches and flatbreads but a half-dozen entrees and a list of small plates that run the gamut from garlic-Parmesan fries to octopus with olives, mint, blood orange, and wildflower honey. There are a dozen beers on tap, including an impressive four barrel-aged options; we liked the hazy, double dry-hopped CHI.P.A. so much that we bought a four-pack of the IPA to take with us.

If you don't want to bike all the way back to Chicago, taking the South Shore Line home is your best option from here: the East Chicago station is less than four miles away. There are a couple short stretches on fairly busy roads, which you can avoid by going to the Hammond station instead, but it's about twice as far away. Make sure you pay close attention to the schedule, though, since the special bike cars that the railway added in 2016 are only attached to some trains (it's always the last car on westbound trains, the first car on eastbound ones—useful information if you don't want to end up running to the other end of the platform with your bike when the train arrives). Once you do get on the train, it's pretty easy: the cars are equipped with racks that hold your bike in place, with seats on one side so you can keep an eye on it. If you picked up beer at Byway or anywhere else, this is a good time to crack one open—you'll have about 45 minutes until you get to Millennium Station. 

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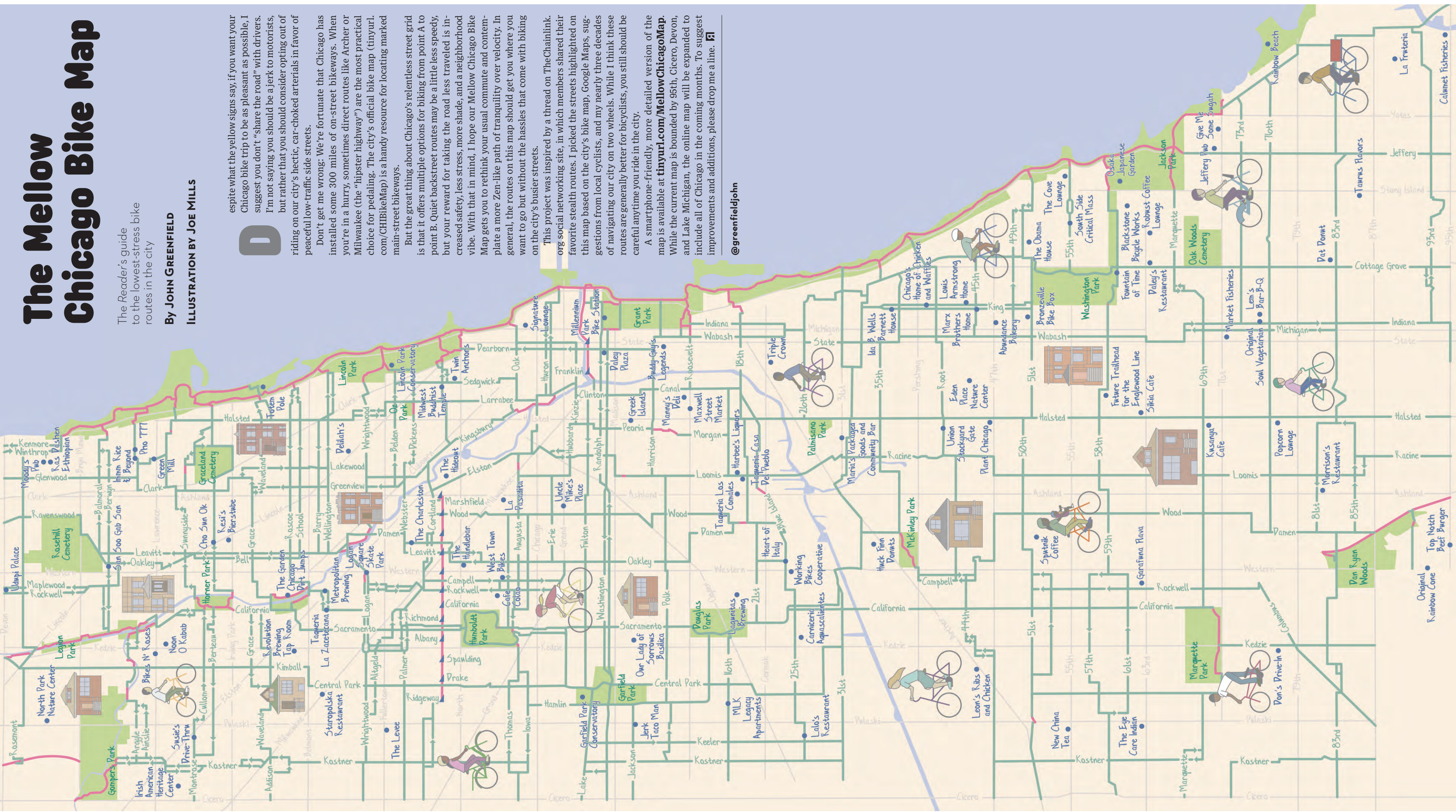
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# The Mellow Chicago Bike Map

The Reader's guide to the lowest-stress bike routes in the city

By **JOHN GREENFIELD**  
ILLUSTRATION BY **JOE MILLS**

**D**espite what the yellow signs say, if you want your Chicago bike trip to be as pleasant as possible, I suggest you don't "share the road" with drivers. I'm not saying you should be a jerk to motorists, but rather that you should consider opting out of riding on our city's hectic, car-choked arterials in favor of peaceful low-traffic side streets.

Don't get me wrong: We're fortunate that Chicago has installed some 300 miles of on-street bikeways. When you're in a hurry, sometimes direct routes like Archer or Milwaukee (the "hipster highway") are the most practical choice for pedaling. The city's official bike map ([tinyurl.com/CHIBikeMap](http://tinyurl.com/CHIBikeMap)) is a handy resource for locating marked main-street bikeways.

But the great thing about Chicago's relentless street grid is that it offers multiple options for biking from point A to point B. Quiet backstreet routes may be a little less speedy, but your reward for taking the road less traveled is increased safety, less stress, more shade, and a neighborhood vibe. With that in mind, I hope our Mellow Chicago Bike Map gets you to rethink your usual commute and contemplate a more Zen-like path of tranquility over velocity. In general, the routes on this map should get you where you want to go but without the hassles that come with biking on the city's busier streets.

This project was inspired by a thread on TheChainlink.org social networking site, in which members shared their favorite stealth routes. I picked the streets highlighted on this map based on the city's bike map, Google Maps, suggestions from local cyclists, and my nearly three decades of navigating our city on two wheels. While I think these routes are generally better for bicyclists, you still should be careful anytime you ride in the city.

A smartphone-friendly, more detailed version of the map is available at [tinyurl.com/MellowChicagoMap](http://tinyurl.com/MellowChicagoMap). While the current map is bounded by 95th, Cicero, Devon, and Lake Michigan, the online map will be expanded to include all of Chicago in the coming months. To suggest improvements and additions, please drop me a line. [fg](mailto:fg@greenfieldjohn.com)

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# Helmet? Hell no!

OK, I occasionally wear them. But they take the joy out of riding.

By **MAYA DUKMASOVA**

I don't ride a bike all that often—because Chicago has a dearth of safe, protected bike lanes on roads I might use for commuting, and because I lack the vigor and bravery needed to ride alongside cars and buses on most of our thoroughfares. But when I do, I hate wearing a helmet. In the summer, it's hot, in the winter, it's cold, and at all times it messes up my hair and looks ugly and stupid. There's also something about wearing one that takes away from the feeling of freedom I associate with being on a bicycle.

I learned to ride a bike in Russia, and between the ages of four and nine never saw or wore a bicycle helmet. I never had any grisly accidents or hit my head when I fell while riding, although as a kid I also wasn't riding alongside traffic. I don't recall ever seeing anyone biking in the crazy street traffic in Saint Petersburg in the 90s—the Soviet-era sidewalks were wide enough to accommodate walkers and bikers. But within weeks of coming to America in 1997 I had a black-and-pink ten-speed mountain bike from Goodwill and a white Bell helmet some government or maybe nonprofit organization was doling out for free to kids at our apartment complex in State College, Pennsylvania. I remember the weird feel-

ing when some guy was fitting it on my head, the way the warm day's breeze was suddenly replaced by the suffocating pressure of Styrofoam against my scalp. I don't think I ever wore that thing again. The adults I was around were mostly immigrants who themselves seemed unfamiliar with the idea that biking could be unsafe for children and that helmets were the remedy required by state law.

Though various bike helmets floated in and out of my life in the years that followed, I never remember paying for them or wearing them much. It always just seemed anathema to biking. My first conscious helmet purchase came once I moved to Chicago and got a Divvy pass a couple of years ago, and even then I only bought it because the annual subscription came with a coupon for a discount on a helmet. I do put it on when I know for sure I'll be riding next to cars for a few miles—or when my partner guilted me into wearing it. Still, I try to avoid it as much as possible.

I thought I'd write this piece about the pros and cons of wearing a bike helmet, but there's already plenty of literature on the topic a quick Google search away. Much of it is devoted to painstaking (and often mind-numbing) analyses of accident data, comparisons between biking cultures in the U.S. and elsewhere (or between U.S. cities), and riffs on what should and shouldn't be a matter of public policy. There are also lots of memes about how, since driving puts people at much higher risk of head injury, it's drivers, not cyclists, who should be wearing helmets.

The basic argument for helmets is that they've long been associated with decreased risk of serious head injury among people hospitalized after bike accidents—especially kids. Some studies have found that helmets reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 60 percent among adult bikers, and as much as 63 percent

among children, though they have also been linked to an increased risk of neck injuries.

A popular argument against helmets has been that their use is linked to riskier passing behavior by drivers, though the findings of the 2007 UK study this is based on have since been challenged.

The overall consensus seems to be that while wearing a helmet is generally a good idea for the rider, it's bad policy to mandate them by law, as it takes pressure off governments to make infrastructure more bike friendly.

Laws mandating helmets may even discourage ridership. One thing that failed bike-share programs in Seattle and two Australian cities had in common were helmet laws that intervened with exactly the sort of casual, often unplanned biking that helps programs like Divvy thrive. Apparently I'm not alone in preferring not to ride a bike rather than to ride one with a helmet.

Currently, no states in the country require bicycle helmets for adults, though more than 60 municipal governments do, according to data compiled by the nonprofit Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute. In Chicago, only bike messengers and delivery people are required to wear helmets. Nevertheless, the overwhelming cultural message around biking is that you should wear a helmet—and shame on you if you don't.

How did we become so convinced that biking is dangerous and that helmets are the answer? Was it the rise of Big Helmet (and by that I mean Bell—which invented the modern bike helmet in 1975—and its succession of subsidiaries and parent companies)? Was it the explosion of lawsuits connected with children's recreational safety in the second half of the 20th century?

The earliest bike helmet law was created for kids under five in New York State in 1989, though a national campaign for children's hel-

met laws was touched off that same year when a 13-year-old boy in Maryland was killed by a car while riding his bike without a helmet. His middle school classmates thought he might have survived had he been wearing one, and with the help of teachers and parents they organized to pass a local bike helmet law for kids under 16. Throughout the 1990s the National Safe Kids Campaign lobbied for similar laws in states and municipalities across the country. This legislative push coincided with a corporate restructuring at Bell that led to greater investment in the production of bike helmets—especially for kids—and heavy advertising of the company's new products in parenting magazines.

Grassroots politics, corporate initiative, a freak accident turned morality tale, consumer safety concerns transformed into law—a truly American cocktail. And one that was unsurprisingly concocted in the post-cold war 90s when, no longer preoccupied by nuclear armageddon, the middle class had little left to worry about besides their children's safety. Am I annoyed more by the feeling of wearing a helmet? Or by the culture surrounding their wear, which somehow makes me feel like science and data and my best, rational interests and sense of agency are actually quite secondary to a pervasive moral panic and clever advertising?

I don't usually talk about how much I loathe bike helmets. It's exhausting to have to justify an apparently irrational choice, even though I'm happy to know there's some science suggesting that not wearing a helmet might be keeping me safer. But I know that neither data to the contrary nor scary accident pictures will make me want to put one on. And at the end of the day, not wearing a helmet doesn't have to be a rational decision. We do many other potentially risky things based on feelings, passions, bodily sensations, or vanity: Stilettos make you more likely to break your ankles. Speeding in a car is risking untimely death. Tinder is Tinder.

About a year ago, I actually had my first bike accident—a collision with another cyclist on a tight turn on the lakefront path at a busy hour. It resulted in me crashing headfirst into a quickly moving, Lycra-clad man on an expensive bike. I googled my symptoms and described them to my physician parents, and I suspect that I suffered at least a minor concussion. But the incident didn't make me feel like I should be wearing protection. Instead it made me reluctant to bike on the lakefront path during rush times.

Oh, and that time, I was wearing a helmet. 

@mdoukmas  
mdoukmasova@chicagoreader.com



**ON SALE FRIDAY 06.22**

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**08.13** 7:30 PM / 18+



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**10.02** 7:30 PM / 17+

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**ELEPHANTE**  
**GLASS MANSION  
ESTATE TOUR** 8:00 PM / 17+

## UPCOMING SHOWS

|              |                                                                                              |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>06.21</b> | <b>THE HORRORS</b><br>BLEACH PARTY                                                           |
| <b>06.22</b> | <b>THE LINDEN METHOD</b><br>ZOMBIE SCHOOLBOY / MAKENA<br>LATE NIGHTS IN MY CAR               |
| <b>06.22</b> | <b>OUR FATHERS</b><br>SOFT CANDY / BAD BAD MEOW                                              |
| <b>06.23</b> | AN EVENING WITH...<br><b>SLOAN</b>                                                           |
| <b>06.28</b> | <b>CODE ORANGE</b><br>NICOLE DOLLANGER<br>TWITCHING TONGUES / VEIN                           |
| <b>06.30</b> | FREELANCE UNDERGROUND PRESENTS:<br><b>MEGA BRAWL</b>                                         |
| <b>07.08</b> | <b>ANTHONY GREEN</b><br>GOOD OLD WAR / FOUND WILD                                            |
| <b>07.13</b> | <b>RED</b><br>FACE THE FIRE / MARWOOD'S FALL<br>BULLET TO THE HEART                          |
| <b>07.28</b> | CREATE YOUR SUMMER TOUR FEATURING:<br><b>KARINA GARCIA, WENGIE &amp;<br/>NATALIES OUTLET</b> |
| <b>08.03</b> | OFFICIAL LOLLAPALOOZA AFTERSHOW<br><b>A BOOGIE WIT DA HOODIE</b><br>FEMOOT                   |
| <b>08.10</b> | RIOT FILMS PRESENTS<br><b>SPARTA</b><br>SOUND & SHAPE                                        |
| <b>08.11</b> | <b>THE SPILL CANVAS</b><br>PUNCHLINE / SELFISH THINGS                                        |
| <b>08.13</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>IONNALÉE</b><br>TUNGORNA                                                |
| <b>08.18</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>SPAG HEDDY</b><br>PORN AND CHICKEN                                      |
| <b>09.06</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>POOLSIDE</b><br>NEIL FRANCES                                            |
| <b>09.25</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>THE CHARLATANS UK</b>                                                   |
| <b>09.26</b> | <b>BLESSTHEFALL</b><br>THE WORD ALIVE / DEO<br>THOUSAND BELOW / A WAR WITHIN                 |
| <b>09.30</b> | <b>PIG</b>                                                                                   |
| <b>10.02</b> | KICKSTAND PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS<br><b>MONSTER MAGNET</b><br>ELECTRIC CITIZEN / DARK SKY CHOIR |
| <b>10.05</b> | <b>THE BOXER REBELLION</b>                                                                   |
| <b>10.06</b> | KICKSTAND PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS<br><b>WINTERSUN</b><br>NE OBLIVISCARIS / SARAH LONGFIELD      |
| <b>10.10</b> | <b>SOB X RBE</b><br>QUANDO RONDO                                                             |
| <b>10.20</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>ELEPHANTE</b>                                                           |
| <b>11.03</b> | REACT PRESENTS<br><b>WHY? PLAYS ALOPECIA</b>                                                 |
| <b>11.17</b> | SILVER WRAPPER PRESENTS<br><b>RUBBLEBUCKET</b>                                               |
| <b>11.19</b> | SILVER WRAPPER PRESENTS<br><b>YOUNG FATHERS</b>                                              |
| <b>11.25</b> | <b>SABRINA BENAIM</b><br>CLEMENTINE VON RADICS                                               |

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## IN ROTATION



Abu Obaida Hassan & His Tambour,  
*The Shaigiya Sound of Sudan*

## PETER MARGASAK

Reader music critic

**Abu Obaida Hassan & His Tambour, *The Shaigiya Sound of Sudan*** After a Sudanese expat cabbie told producer Vik Sohonie that a song he loved was by Abu Obaida Hassan, Sohonie spent five years tracking down Hassan's music and then the man himself (though he'd been rumored dead). This collection features eight killer tracks from the 70s and 80s, with Hassan accompanying his own soulful singing on amplified *tambour*—a five-string lyre—over percolating Daleeb rhythms from northern Sudan. It's an invaluable glimpse of a culture largely lost to the ravages of civil war.

**Misha Mengelberg, Pech Onderweg** A ravishing and deceptively slack solo set by Dutch pianist Misha Mengelberg, this 1978 live recording was originally released in '79 by Bvhaast (run by saxophonist Willem Breuker) and reissued last year on vinyl by ICP. It captures the pianist's idiosyncratic improvisational logic as he morphs from one episode to the next, his ideas sometimes sticking the threads together and sometimes flinging them apart.

**The International Nothing, *In Doubt We Trust*** The duo of German clarinetists Kai Fagaschinski and Michael Thieke create all manner of psychoacoustic effects with acoustic instruments, building a seamless 37-minute piece from long tones, tongue pops, spittle flecks, unpitched breaths, and other extended techniques. They drone, pulse, wiggle, and swarm, pulling apart and coming together, sometimes suggesting electronic feedback, and generally producing an experience so immersive I'm bummed when it ends.

A *Reader* staffer shares three musical obsessions, then asks someone (who asks someone else) to take a turn.

## BILL HARRIS

Drummer, composer, and producer

**Ben LaMar Gay, *Downtown Castles Can Never Block the Sun*** If you don't know Ben, you better do something about it immediately. The Chicago multi-instrumentalist's debut album, *Downtown Castles Can Never Block the Sun*, compiles 15 tracks from records he's made over the past seven years but never released. Ben is an iconoclast and a hugely creative spirit, and on this album he melds an expansive amount of sound and imagery into something that feels like a 15-scene movie rather than a simple audio recording.

**Ryley Walker, *Deafman Glance*** I first became familiar with Ryley years ago, when I stumbled upon his 2015 release *Primrose Green*. I've always been impressed with his songwriting as well as his melodic and harmonic sensibilities, and on the new *Deafman Glance* they've matured into something more abstract and complex. I also appreciate Ryley's ability to get the right musicians in a room together to create something extraordinary.

Ben LaMar Gay  MAREN CELEST

**ZRL, ZRL** The group ZRL consists of three of my favorite Chicago musicians and improvisers: Lia Kohl on cello, Zach Good on clarinet and other reeds, and Ryan Packard on vibraphone, electronics, and drums. Every time I see them play live, I'm impressed with their ability to straddle the blurry line between new music and improvisation in a way that makes their work sound composed. Plus something about the timbral combination of vibes, cello,



**Gira Dahnee**  **TONY SMITH**

and clarinet on their self-titled 2017 album is incredibly colorful to me and makes it hard to put down.

**ANGEL BAT DAWID** Clarinetist,  
pianist, composer, and vinyl addict

**Marvin Tate** Chicago is just burstin', oozin', and drippin' with rich and tantalizing creative juices. One of the local musicians whose name I want to blast out there is master poet, artist, and singer Marvin Tate. Once again he's put together something so magically amazing: his band the Kitchen Sink. His riveting poetry songs often deal with hot topics—on "N Word," for instance, he preaches all in n-words without ever saying the N-word. And then there's "Black Bike Ride," where he leads a chant describing thousands of black people riding bikes naked and how powerful the images of "tattoos and booty cracks" would be. Getting slapped in the face with that much blackness all at once... it's pretty epic.

**Gira Dahnee** Chicago composer, pianist, and vocalist Gira Dahnee is coming out with her first full album, *A Call to Love*, this year! Her original compositions are hauntingly spiritual, vulnerable, and just wondrously beautiful. To get a dose of what this powerful sista is bringing, check out the riveting "Painted Waltz" from her 2015 EP *Future Geechee*.

**Culture Power45** Culture Power45 is more than a record label—it's an epic movement! Some of Chicago's premier producers, DJs, and MCs have come together to create straight-to-vinyl hip-hop gloriousness. It's a revolutionary thing to put hip-hop on vinyl in the MP3 download era. Join the movement!



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HARD COUNTRY HONKY TONK WITH THE HOYLE BROTHERS  
THE CANDESCENTS • DJ WILLIE DUTCH

**SAT 6/23** 12PM-FREE **WINDY CITY SOUL CLUB**  
6PM-FREE 'MIRRORED' SERIES FEAT. **BOWL CUT**  
BYE BYE SOWLEY BRUNCH

**SUN 6/24** 3PM-FREE **ADAM FAUCETT & THE TALL GRASS**  
EMPTY BOTTLE BOOK CLUB DISCUSSES 'ASYMMETRY' BY LISA HALLIDAY  
CASS CWIK • IZZY OLIVE (HALF GRINGA)

**MON 6/25** FREE **OPTIONS**  
BAD HEAVEN LTD • JODI • V.V. LIGHTBODY

**TUE 6/26** **BAMBARA**  
GANSER • REVERENT

**WED 6/27** 6PM-FREE **WONDER & SKEPTICISM**  
YOU SHAKE MY NERVES AND YOU RATTLE MY BRAIN  
**HIT BARGAIN**  
FORCED INTO FEMININITY • HUNTER HUSAR (DJ SET)

**THU 6/28** **KILLER MOON • HOT GARBAGE**  
WET WALLET

**FRI 6/29** **THE BODY**  
BIGBRAVE • LINGUA IGNOTA

**SAT 6/30** **HAR MAR SUPERSTAR SINGS SAM COOKE**  
TWO SHOWS!

**SUN 7/1** **SERPENTWITHFEET**  
LEE MO

7/2: DIAGONAL (RECORD RELEASE-FREE), 7/3: POOKY, 7/5: MICHAEL RAULT, 7/6-7/8 @ CHICAGO AND DAMEN: WEST FEST 2018, 7/6: THE MAKE-UP, 7/7: SHAME, 7/8: MAYPOLE PRESENTS SQUARE DANCING WITH JENNY & THE HOG DROVERS (12PM), 7/8: KEVIN MORBY, 7/9: ROBERT EARL THOMAS (FREE), 7/10: BRIGID MAE POWER, 7/11: FAUST, 7/11 @ CO-PROSPERITY SPHERE: SUICIDEYEAR, 7/12: WAX CHATTELS, 7/13: VIDEO AGE, 7/14: UNSANE, 7/15: COURTESY, 7/16: ZIGTEBRA (FREE), 7/17: PETE WILLSON AND THE ROOKS (RECORD RELEASE), 7/18: DENT MAY, 7/22: PHOELIX, 7/23: GRÜN WASSER (FREE), 7/24: GLITTER CREPS PRESENTS NO MEN • LUMPS, NEW ON SALE: 7/19: CIRCUIT DES YEUX • LOLINA, 7/20: ZOLA JESUS, 8/5: SUNSEEKER • SKYWAYMAN, 8/8: JESS WILLIAMSON, 8/18: MEATWAVE, 8/23: PALM, 8/28: THE MOLOCHS • SMOKE SCREENS, 8/29: GRINGO STAR, 10/14: IDRIS ACKAMOR & THE PYRAMIDS

**THALIA HALL**

**JUN 26** **MOUNT EERIE**

**JUL 01** **MIND OVER MIRRORS LARAAJI**

**JUN 06** **ALY & AJ**

**JUL 21** **JAPANESE BREAKFAST** Pitchfork AFTERSHOW

**JUL 27** **NEGATIVE SCANNER RECORD RELEASE** ROUND 3

**AUG 23** **SEU JORGE**

**JUN 23** **OLAFUR ARNALDS**

**JUN 24** **RY COODER**

**JUN 27/28** **OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW**

**JUL 13** **THE JAYHAWKS**

**JUL 14** **DUSSEPALOOZA**

**JUL 15** **THE JIMMY DORE SHOW**

**JUL 18** **DINOSAUR JR.**

**JUL 19/20** **BRYAN CALLEN**

**JUL 29** **THE MUSIC OF TOM PETTY FOR KIDS**

**JUL 30/31** **BEN HARPER & CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE**

**AUG 01** **REBELUTION**

**AUG 02** **PARQUET COURTS**

**AUG 03** **TANK AND THE BANGAS**

**AUG 04** **ALINA BARAZ**

**AUG 07** **AMANDA SEALES**

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**JUL 05** **JARROD LAWSON**

**AUG 10** **TONY! TONI! TONÉ!**

**AUG 24** **AFTER 7**

**AUG 31** **PAA KOW**

**JUN 21** **THE HAMILTONES & DANTE HALL**

**JUN 22** **POETIC JUSTICE SCREENING + SIP & PAINT**

**JUN 22** **ON BAAABBEEY: BOUNCE VS. JUKE!**

**JUN 23** **PUT THEM PHONES DOWN DAY PARTY!**

**JUN 23** **NIGHT SHOW PART THREE**

**JUN 24** **EVERYONE LOVES AFROFUSION DAY PARTY**

**JUN 26** **FIGHTS & FLIGHTS**

**JUN 27** **CHICAGO NIGHT LIVE - A POETIC ART EXPERIENCE**

**JUN 29** **PASSPORT VIBES: CARNIVALE**

**JUN 30** **CHICAGO BLACK PRIDE - LOVE FEST DAY PARTY**

**JUN 30** **THE BLACK PRIDE WEEKEND WHITE PARTY FEAT. TWEET**

**JUL 03** **4TH ANNUAL HOUSE CLUB TOUR/ PUB CRAWL**

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## PICK OF THE WEEK

## Pioneering Chicago house artist Steve 'Silk' Hurley plays a Metro edition of Smart Bar dance party Queen

**STEVE "SILK" HURLEY, CECE PENISTON, DAJAE, JOE SMOOTH, SHAUN J. WRIGHT, HEY RAE CHARDONNAY**

Fri 6/22, 9 PM, Metro, 3730 N. Clark, \$10, \$5 in advance. 18+

VIA FACEBOOK

THE HISTORY OF HOUSE music would be incomplete without southeast-side native Steve "Silk" Hurley. After landing a regular DJ gig at south-side house hot spot Sauer's in the early 80s, he was inspired to make his own tracks, and the work he produced throughout the rest of that decade played a critical role in informing the world about house. As half of J.M. Silk he created the "Music Is the Key" 12-inch, which in 1985 became the first release from DJ International, the local outfit that would become an influential house label; with 1986's "Jack Your Body" he popularized "jack," one of the genre's definitive terms, and introduced Chicago house to the UK, where the song hit number one on the dance charts; he also released some of the first major-label house hits through RCA. Hurley became a phenomenon as a solo artist too—his debut for Atlantic, 1989's "Work It Out," peaked at number three on *Billboard's* dance chart—and made him an in-demand remixer for stars such as Michael Jackson and Madonna. By the early 00s the international spotlight on Hurley faded, but he remained active; in 2005 he teamed up with DJ Skip to form S&S

Records, which continues to release warm, easygoing house tracks reminiscent of early days of the genre, when it owed everything to obscure lavish disco songs. In May S&S released a digital single of a track called "Reason" that features 15 different remixes anchored by Hurley's eight-minute "House Banger" version with lively keys and unhurried hand drums that dreamily blend together. Hurley's a masterful DJ too; when I saw him spin at last year's Chosen Few Picnic, the part of the field in front of the festival stage grew so tightly packed with people I couldn't see a blade of grass, but everyone kept dancing despite the crush and the afternoon heat. To study Hurley's skills more closely, I'd recommend picking up *Jack to the Lost Chicago Reels*, Still Music's new cassette series sourced from reel-to-reel mixes Chicago house DJs have made for local radio stations; the first set is made up of four tapes, each one designated with the letters J, A, C, or K. Hurley's mini mix takes up the A side of the A cassette, and he blends hip-house and raw house so seamlessly I'd rather listen to these cuts as a whole than experience the individual parts as stand-alone tracks. —LEOR GALIL

## THURSDAY21

**PAAL NILSSEN-LOVE'S LARGE UNIT** See also Friday. 9 PM, Elastic, 3429 W. Diversey, \$15. ALL

It's no small feat that Norwegian drummer Paal Nilssen-Love has maintained his sprawling, heavily improvised big band—the dubiously named Large Unit—for half a decade in an era where economic realities are at odds with keeping an actively recording and touring group of international players together. But he's done just that with a largely unchanging cast of first-rate musicians from Scandinavia that's toured on four continents. While the leader clearly relishes the feverish interplay of a dozen players, his writing for the group has grown more sophisticated and ambitious, with pieces that often develop from riff-oriented frameworks for blowing into more involved vehicles that explore unusual rhythms and the occasional lovely harmony. The music on Large Unit's 2016 album *Ana* was recorded with two additional percussionists, Brazilian musicians Celio de Carvalho and Paulinho Bicolor, who play an arsenal of regional instruments including cuica, tamborim, pandeiro, and berimbau. Rather than simply adding to the polyrhythmic stew, the band incorporates the feel of those indigenous rhythms into its onslaught, deftly fueling its multi-horn action with an unexpected Carnival punch. On last year's *Fluku*, the group contrasted the jagged, high-octane counterpoint that pulses through the brassy title track with "Springsummer," a tender ballad on which Danish player Julie Kjær weaves her flute through a pastel-hued arrangement. "Playgo" delivers a different kind of surprise, with punchy, pointillistic brass patterns propelling a series of tuneful improvisations as the energy slowly but deliberately builds up to a raucous explosion. For the group's latest project, the digital album *More Fun, Please*, Nilssen-Love merged members of his group with Intuitive People, a 20-strong student ensemble from the Norwegian Academy of Music, for a commissioned work, an extended piece that draws on contemporary classical music and has room for improvisation and radical extremes in timbre, density, and dynamics. The lineup for the group's first Chicago visit since 2015 features reedists Julie Kjær, Kristoffer Berre Alberts, Klaus Ellerhusen Holm, trombonist Mats Åleklint, trumpeter Thomas Johansson, guitarist Ketil Gutvik, bassists Jon Rune Strøm and Christian Meaas Svendsen, tubaist Per Åke Holmlander, drummer Andreas Wildhagen, electronic noise musician Tommi Keränen, and sound designer Christian Obermayer. —PETER MARGASAK

**ICEAGE** *Black Lips, Mary Lattimore, and Torture Love* open. 7 PM, House of Vans, 113 N. Elizabeth, free with RSVP at [houseofvanschicago.queueapp.com](http://houseofvanschicago.queueapp.com). 18+

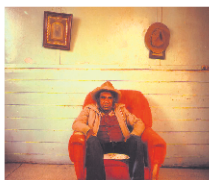
When your ragtag, noisy hardcore-meets-postpunk band has spent the better part of a decade as one of the most deservedly hyped rock groups in the world, which direction do you choose next? In the case of Copenhagen's Iceage, you drop the aggression and gloom of your early work, start over, and create an art-punk masterpiece. On May's ➔



**THE ENGLISH BEAT**  
HEAVY MANNERS  
DJ CHUCK WREN  
FRI JUL 6  
8PM / 18+



**THE MATCHES**  
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7PM / ALL AGES



ON SALE FRIDAY!  
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ANNIVERSARY OF  
'LET ME COME OVER'  
SAT SEPT 8  
7:30PM / 18+



ON SALE FRIDAY!  
HORTON'S HOILDAY HAYRIDE:  
**REVEREND HORTON HEAT**  
JUNIOR BROWN  
THE BLASTERS / BIG SANDY  
FRI NOV 30  
8PM / 18+

**THURSDAY JUN 21 / 8PM / 17+**  
Madison House presents  
**XAVIER RUDD**  
XIUHTEZCAL

**FRIDAY JUN 22 / 9PM - 2AM / 18+**  
Red Bull Music presents  
**QUEEN!**  
WITH STEVE "SILK" HURLEY  
CECE PENISTON / DAJAE  
JOE SMOOTH / SHAUN J. WRIGHT  
RAE CHARDONNAY

**SATURDAY JUN 23 / 11PM / 21+**  
Neverland Presents  
A Chicago Pride Main Event  
**ASTROLOGY:**  
A ZODIAC-THEMED  
PRIDE DANCE PARTY  
DJ ISAAC ESCALANTE  
DJ ALEX CABOT

**TUESDAY JUN 26 / 8:30PM / ALL AGES**  
The Vixen presents  
**BLACK GIRL MAGIC**  
ASIA O'HARA / MONET X CHANGE  
MONIQUE HEART / THE VIXEN  
SHEA COULEE / DIDA RITZ  
BAMBI BANKS / EVA STYLES  
LUCY STOOLE / SASHA LOVE

**SATURDAY JUN 30 / 11PM / 21+**  
Wassup N ATL & Clubhouse  
Productions/Urbano present  
**URBANO BLACK**  
PRIDE PARTY

**SATURDAY JUL 7 / 8:30PM / 18+**  
Metro & Half Acre present:  
On The Floor featuring  
**TURNSPIT**  
BLIND ADAM AND THE FEDERAL LEAGUE  
GET BY

**FRIDAY JUL 13 / 8PM / 18+**  
Empire Productions welcomes  
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08/17 SLEIGH BELLS  
08/24 GODFLESH  
09/13 NOTHING BUT THIEVES  
09/21-09/23 COLD WAVES VII  
09/29 GORILLA BISCUITS  
09/29 HONNE  
09/30 ALINA BARAZ  
10/04 THE PRESETS

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DJ SYQUEST / DIOPTRICS  
MIA CREW B2B SET  
SELEKTA STEEL / MEGA MIKE  
FIYAFY / RIFLE MC

**FRIDAY JUN 22**  
VAKULA / PHILLIP STONE  
MDO

**SUNDAY JUNE 24**  
Queen! Pride with  
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MICHAEL SERAFINI  
GARRETT DAVID

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Friday, July 20

**Tame Impala** / Courtney Barnett  
**Mount Kimbie** / Big Thief / Earl Sweatshirt  
**Syd** / Julien Baker / Saba / Open Mike Eagle  
**Julie Byrne** / Joshua Abrams & Natural  
**Information Society** / Lucy Dacus / Melkbelly  
**The Curls**

Saturday, July 21

**Fleet Foxes** / The War on Drugs / Blood Orange  
**Raphael Saadiq** / This Is Not This Heat  
**Moses Sumney** / Kelela / Girlpool  
**Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith** / Circuit des Yeux  
**Nilüfer Yanya** / Zola Jesus / berhana  
**Paul Cherry**

Sunday, July 22

**Ms. Lauryn Hill** The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill 20th Anniversary Performance  
**Chaka Khan** / DRAM / Noname / Japandroids  
(Sandy) Alex G / Alex Cameron / Smino  
**Japanese Breakfast** / Kelly Lee Owens  
**Ravyn Lenae** / Kweku Collins / Irreversible  
**Entanglements** / Nnamdi Ogbonnaya

## MUSIC

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Paal Nilssen-Love's Large Unit © PETRA CVELBAR

continued from 28

*Beyondless* (Matador), Iceage lays out dense, layered tracks that pile crisscrossing guitars, horns, and strings on top of pushy, dark, knotty songs that highlight the group's epic melodic sensibility. Some tunes on *Beyondless* hit like *Lust for Life*-era Iggy Pop, infusing a surprisingly glamorous opulence into the ever-present grimy postpunk energy. Others, such as the second single from the record, "Pain Killer"—which features backing vocals from pop star Sky Ferreira and a massive big-band horn section—swing for the cheap seats, conjuring an almost uplifting, triumphant majesty the band hasn't ever touched before. —**LUCA CIMARUSTI**

## FRIDAY 22

**THOMAS COMERFORD** *Quarter Mile Thunder* opens. 9 PM, Hungry Brain, 2319 W. Belmont. 21+ **FREE**

Thomas Comerford is a devoted student of rock music who takes his own contributions to the form as seriously as its rich history. He operates with meticulous detail and patience, which might explain why it's been four years since his last release, the 2014 album *II*. Since then, he's expanded his pool of collaborators, and through extensive studio sessions and live performances leading up to his new *Blood Moon*, he's developed more sophisticated arrangements than ever. Sixteen musicians play on the album's eight tracks, but Comerford's vision enables them to produce a unified sound that harks back to 70s rock, gliding over neat strumming and propelled by a patient rhythm section. The music conveys an attractively loose sensibility, yet every note feels carefully placed. Opener "Lord of the Flies," a poetic expression of undying love and support, is a stunner, with John Lennox providing shimmering electric-guitar accents that sail over the groove with liquid elegance as Comerford's plaintive singing is met by the intricate, soulful vocal harmonies of Crystal Hartford, Angela James, and Beth Yates in a call-and-response style that recalls late-70s Dylan at his best. Amalea Tshilds's vocals serve as a crucial sweetener to

Comerford's parched singing on "Stumblebum," a testimony to stubborn hope. "Lull" embraces a looser, more improvisatory feel, with elastic double-bass lines played by Tatsu Aoki and rambling lead guitar from Gregg Ostrom that suggests a bucolic Lou Reed. Tonight Comerford performs with some of his recurrent collaborators, including Lennox, bassist Chris Ruptash, drummer Seth Vanek, and singers James and Ariel Bolles. —**PETER MARGASAK**

**STEVE "SILK" HURLEY** See *Pick of the Week*, page 28. Cece Peniston, Dajae, Joe Smooth, Shaun J. Wright, and Hey Rae Chardonnay open. 9 PM, Metro, 3730 N. Clark, \$10, \$5 in advance. 18+

**JADE JACKSON** See also Saturday and Sunday. *Social Distortion* headlines; Aaron Lee Tasjan and Jade Jackson open. 8 PM, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, \$37.50. 17+

Jade Jackson reveals her relative inexperience in songwriting when she opens her debut album, *Gilded* (Anti-), with the couplet, "I grew up my father's daughter / He said, 'Don't take no shit from no one.'" The 25-year-old artist may well be relaying a genuine experience for all I know, but those banal lines set the tone for an album by someone who admires country music but isn't yet able to add anything to the tradition. Though she has a powerful voice, she too often overuses mannerisms such as a catch in her throat or a melodramatic swoop into her upper register, and on tunes such as "Salt to Sugar" her admiration for Lucinda Williams becomes a straitjacket. *Gilded* was produced by Social Distortion's Mike Ness, who pushes Jackson's scrappy band away from Nashville gloss toward a lean country-punk sound that's occasionally embroidered by ringers such as Nickel Creek fiddler Sara Watkins and pedal-steel virtuoso Greg Leisz. Jackson's songs revolve around garden-variety heartbreak, infidelity, and regret, and sometimes they spill into cliché: "Troubled End" describes how a yearning for momentary excitement ends badly, and "Motorcycle" celebrates a solitary sense of discovery on the open road. Despite these flaws,







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Rebirth Brass Band

COURTESY THE ARTIST

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occasion when Austin indie-rock kings Spoon have shared top billing with foundational Chicago hip-hop figure and Oscar winner Common, which will happen Saturday night. And Common's not the only Mamby performer who calls Chicago home; some of the fest's brightest acts are also locals. On Saturday, Towkio and Cupcakke celebrate their recent noteworthy albums, *WWW* and *Ephorize*, respectively, with respectfully high-billed sets, and Pivot Gang rapper Joseph Chilliams plays his first big local show behind his *Mean Girls*-inspired EP *The Plastics*—which dropped on Juneteenth, the June 19 celebration of the abolition of slavery. Sunday includes R&B standout Jamila Woods and soulful electronic duo Drama, who support their luxurious new EP, April's *Lies After Love*. Mamby is a React Presents festival, which means the DJ tent is as big a draw as the bands. The final day of the fest features the one-two punch of Cajual recording artist Gene Farris and Canadian minimal techno hero Richie Hawtin. —LEOR GALIL

release, 2014's *Move Your Body* (Basin Street), incorporates funk and mild hip-hop touches, and the fusion is seamless. Rather than get in your face and demand you notice how up-to-date the record is—something that too often happens when blues or even zydeco acts attempt the feat—the band makes every element sound like just another ingredient in the stew. The Rebirth Brass Band shows that it's possible both to hold on to tradition without coming across like a dated museum piece as well as to incorporate newer genres without shameless pandering. —JAMES PORTER

THURSDAY See Friday. Thursday play Full Collapse at the early show and War All the Time at the late one. 6 and 10 PM; Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln, \$35. 18+

SUNDAY24

JADE JACKSON See Friday. Social Distortion headlines; Aaron Lee Tasjan and Jade Jackson open. 8 PM, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, \$37.50. 17+

MAMBY ON THE BEACH See Saturday. Noon, Oakwood Beach, 4100 S. Lake Shore Dr., \$79 per day, \$109 weekend pass. 18+

THURSDAY See Friday. Thursday play War All the Time tonight. 4 PM, Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln, \$35. 18+

JOHN WIESE, JOE & JOE John Wiese headlines; Joe & Joe and Carol Genetti open. 9 PM, Elastic, 3429 W. Diversey, \$10. 18

Veteran LA noise maven John Wiese has dramatically slowed his release schedule in recent years, but





Sarah Louise CLAIRE LEARNED

he's made up for that relative scarcity by increasing the rigor in each project. Last month he dropped *Continuous Hole* (Gilgongo), a stunning collaboration with Drew Daniel of Matmos that redirects his

## MUSIC

pendant for sonic violence. The pair spent a decade developing the album's 11 terse, fat-free tracks, arranging impossibly dense packets of visceral noise into ferocious rhythmic patterns borrowed from club music. Daniel has routinely applied similar tactics in Matmos to translate found sound into musical information, but using a kaleidoscopic range of abstract, piercing noises is a new variation for him, and Wiese provides the perfect foil in the process. The result is neither dance oriented nor unhinged; instead it ripples with a steely discipline that reduces the materials into the most concentrated bursts of sound possible. Tonight Wiese performs solo, presenting work more akin to the meticulous strain of musique concrete he's developed on his last few recordings.

Also performing are **Joe & Joe**, a duo featuring Joe Potts and Joseph Hammer, both charter members of the Los Angeles Free Music Society, a loose association of oddballs committed to making weirdly madcap experimental music that since the 70s has helped lay the groundwork for the noise underground. I've only heard an excerpt from the most recent cassette release by the duo, but its in-your-face grind is rife with harsh smears of sound from crude tape manipulations, humming ambience, and industrial roars. Joe & Joe rarely make it through town, so even without knowing exactly what they'll be proffering, I'd say this show is a gamble worth taking. —**PETER MARGASAK** ➔

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- 8.28 LOUIS PRIMA JR. & THE WITNESSES
- 9.21 LERA LYNN
- 10.2 MATT ANDERSEN
- 10.18 STEVEN PAGE TRIO  
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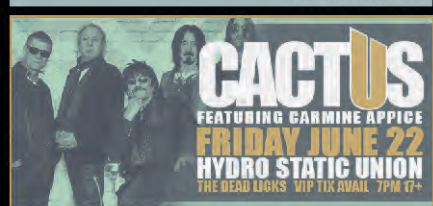
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- 7.5 MINDI ABAR & THE BONESHAKERS
- 7.6 CORKY SIEGEL'S CHAMBER BLUES  
& LYNNE JORDAN
- 7.7 CARBON LEAF
- 7.8 THE JAMES HUNTER SIX
- 7.9 HOWARD JONES
- 7.10 LIZ LONGLEY & SCOTT MULVAHILL
- 7.11 ANTHONY DAVID
- 7.12 THE BACON BROTHERS
- 7.13 WE HATE MOVIES
- 7.14 MAC MCANALLY
- 7.15 WAYNE HANCOCK & SCOTT H. BIRAM
- 7.16 SHE'S CRAFTY - BEASTIE BOYS TRIBUTE
- 7.17 BOY NAMED BANJO
- 7.18 HOWIE DAY
- 7.19 ROGER CLYNE
- 7.20 KENNY LATTIMORE
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- 7.24 MARCUS JOHNSON W/ KATHY KOSINS





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**RAEYLN NELSON BAND**  
**SOUR BROTHERS • MAX BENSON**

**SAT 6/23 8PM** BLACK METAL  
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## MUSIC

continued from 33

### WEDNESDAY 27

**SARAH LOUISE** Marisa Anderson headlines.  
8:30 PM, Constellation, 3111 N. Western, \$15. 18+

Fingerstyle guitar is a peculiar thing—it's a practice that often sucks its practitioners into a rabbit hole at the expense of other approaches. That's certainly not the case with Sarah Louise (née Sarah Louise Henson), the North Carolinian who made her mark with a couple of dazzling solo instrumental albums before demonstrating a larger sonic palette with her Appalachian-flavored folk duo House & Land. Last month she pivoted even more dramatically on her new album, *Deeper Woods* (Thrill Jockey), a thoughtful, often psychedelic meditation on nature, particularly the verdant hills of her native Asheville. She sings on every song, and though she plays her usual 12-string acoustic guitar on most of the album's seven original pieces, the music is much more dense than her previous material, often taking a swirling ensemble-oriented approach: closer "Fire Pink and Milkweed" features just her overdubbed voice, but elsewhere she adds electric guitar, electric piano, recorder, and synthesizer and is joined by several regular collaborators including fiddler Sally Anne Morgan (of House & Land), drummer Thom Nguyen, and cellist Emmalee Hunnicutt. On *Deeper Woods* her incantations delve into the mysterious beauty of the rural spaces she resides in, embracing the names of flowers and plants like saxifrage, pinwheel moss, gentian, and primrose as much for their sound as for the splendor they represent, and extolling nature's balmlike qualities ("On Nights When I Can't Sleep" she sings of climbing a white oak tree, which brings her a sense of peace). Several songs reflect on the boundaries between human civilization and the untouched wild; "The Field That Touches My House and Yours" turns the notion of property rights on its head, while "Up on the Ridge" posits that being one with the natural world might just be the most profound kind of love. —PETER MARGASAK

**TRACEYANNE & DANNY** Lomelda opens. 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln, \$20. 18+

Glaswegian TraceyAnne Campbell understandably retreated from playing music after her best friend



TraceyAnne & Danny © ANNA ISOLA CROLLA

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# THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC

PIVOTAL CHICAGO MUSICIANS THAT SOMEHOW HAVE NOT GOTTEN THEIR JUST DUES by PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE

## Mugicians

CHICAGO'S BEST KEPT PROG-ROCK SECRET HAS TO BE THE MUGICIANS, WHO NEVER RELEASED A SINGLE NOTE OF MUSIC. I GOT THE STORY FROM GUITARIST & SINGER KEITH FALLICO, BORN IN CHICAGO ON OCTOBER 22, 1968. A FAN OF THE DOOBIE BROTHERS AND STEELY DAN, FALLICO STARTED DRUMMING IN BANDS IN HIGH SCHOOL—HIS GROUP CRASH, A 7-PIECE WITH BRASS, PLAYED SENIOR PROM. WHILE ATTENDING LOYOLA, FALLICO SPOTTED AN AD READING "GUITARIST WANTED... NO EGOS." HE JOKES, "I ANSWERED IT ANYWAY." THUS HE MET KEYBOARDIST TONY ZAGONE (FROM NILES) AND DRUMMER DAVE ROYKO (FROM EDGEBROOK), AND IN 1979 THEY FORMED THE MUGICIANS. FALLICO'S FIRST GIG ON GUITAR. "THE BAND WAS REALLY THE COMBINING OF A SONGWRITER WITH A PROGRESSIVE, INSTRUMENTAL POWER DUO," HE EXPLAINS. THE TRIO BONDED OVER THEIR LOVE OF PROG ROCKERS YES & KANSAS, AND ARMED WITH EPIC, SPIRALING TUNES SUCH AS "THE TRAVELLER" AND "THE CHASE," THEY STARTED PLAYING OUT—AT THE RED LION, AT THE CIRCLE INN, AT HAYMAKERS IN WHEELING (WHERE THEY BECAME

REGULARS, OPENING FOR THE LIKES OF THE BOYZZ AND TOUGH LOVE). THEIR HIGHEST-PROFILE SHOW WAS AT CHICAGO FEST IN 1982, AND THEY NEVER LANDED A RECORDING CONTRACT. THEY DID, HOWEVER, CUT HIGH-QUALITY DEMOS—SOME IN PARENTS' BASEMENTS, OTHERS IN A STUDIO IN THE NORTH SHORE MANSION OF THE COFOUNDER OF JOVAN MUSK. THE MUGICIANS' VIRTUOSIC COMPOSITIONS SOMETIMES SOUND LIKE AN EDGIER STYX OR A MORE COMPLICATED GENTLE GIANT. IN LATE '81 GARY BRANDT CAME ABOARD ON BASS, SOON TO BE REPLACED BY RODDY ROBELIUS, AT WHICH POINT SINGER DAVID ARCHIBALD ALSO JOINED. IN LATE '82, THOUGH, THE BAND FELL APART AFTER ARCHIBALD GOT A JOB WITH REVOLON. THEY WERE ALSO DISCOURAGED BY AUDIENCES JUST WANTING COVERS—AS ZAGONE COLORFULLY PUTS IT, "WE GOT TIRED OF PLAYING FOR THAT ONE BULGING-EYED VICTIM," MEANING THE LOVE SUPERFAN WHO SEEMED TO BE IN EVERY CROWD. FALLICO AND ZAGONE WENT ON TO PLAY IN CHANGES TILL THE MID-'90S, AND THEY'RE STILL IN BASKETCASE WITH BRANDT. —THANKS KEITH!

TUNE INTO THE RADIO VERSION OF "THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC" ON "OUTSIDE THE LOOP" ON WGN RADIO 720 AM, SATURDAY AT 6AM WITH HOST MIKE STEPHEN. COMMENTS, IDEAS TO [plasticcw@hotmail.com](mailto:plasticcw@hotmail.com) ARCHIVED @ [OUTSIDETHELOOPRADIO.COM](http://OUTSIDETHELOOPRADIO.COM)

and longtime bandmate in Camera Obscura Carey Lander died from bone cancer in 2015 at age 33. The band has been on hiatus ever since, and it's heartening to see Campbell reemerge on a new project with Bristol singer-songwriter and fellow pop auteur Danny Coughlan (who has performed under the name Crybaby). On their debut album, *TraceyAnne & Danny* (Merge), which features crystalline production from veteran Britpop master Edwyn Collins, Campbell's honeyed voice is as distinct and indelible as ever, projecting a blend of classic 60s girl-group sound and 50s dream-pop through a modern, Britpop filter. The record's most poignant track is the strolling, pedal-steel-kissed single "Alabama," a tribute to Lander that situates inconsolable sadness within sweet memories. "But I like travelling with you and you liked it best with me / With an old southern gothic novel in my

hand / You'll always be with me," Campbell sings. The closing track, "O'Keeffe," celebrates the titular painter's love affair with the southwest, but most of the album's irresistibly hooky, elegant tunes reflect on romantic travails: "Home & Dry" meditates on the struggle to maintain excitement and ardor amid the quotidian demands of parenthood, and "It Can't Be Love Unless It Hurts" addresses familiar, unrequited feelings of desire. Coughlan is a wholly competent, nuanced singer—he brings an affecting touch of Roy Orbison to "Jacqueline"—but Campbell's easygoing delivery is so charming, infectious, and downright pretty it's easy to overlook his role though they spend equal time at the mike. Still, there's no missing their chemistry and the shared aesthetic that imbues their melodies with a glow that transcends any sort of retro fetishism. It's good to have Campbell back. —PETER MARGASAK





Bay scallops with catmint blossoms, XO sauce, and soy-onion puree with citron  ALISHA SOMMER

## RESTAURANT REVIEW

# Passerotto is a tale of two peninsulas

Chef Jennifer Kim's unlikely union of Korean and Italian is seamless and inspired.

By **MIKE SULA**

I was once taken by well-meaning hosts to a large Italian chain restaurant in the midsize city of Gwangju, South Korea. After several weeks of stuffing me with everything the putative bread basket of the peninsula had to offer, they thought I might be missing a taste of home. So we went for pizza.

Served on red-checked tablecloths, some pies had long strips of cooked squash baked into them. Others were slathered in corn and mayonnaise. All of them were thick and biscuity, unlike anything I'd ever eaten before. For me, they were a scratch for an itch that didn't exist.

And yet Koreans the world over are masters at adapting other cuisines to suit their own tastes, with universally appealing results.

Korean fried chicken is divine proof that the birds are meant to be eaten. Cross-border Korean-Chinese migration patterns gave us black-bean-sauce-drenched ja jiang mian, the most comforting noodles in the world. In the aughts, LA's Koji BBQ food truck, piloted by a Korean-American chef, essentially launched an American street-food revolution with spicy pork tacos and kimchi quesadillas. Meanwhile in New York, David Chang was roasting whole sugar-crusted pork shoulders and serving them *bo saam* style with kimchi, raw oysters, fermented chile-soybean sauce, and Bibb lettuce to wrap it all up.

It's safe to say that a unique vein of Korean-American cuisine has threaded across the country since then. We in the midwest have experienced it too, from Bill

Kim's wanton global sampling at the Bellys to Beverly Kim's seemingly limitless inventions at Parachute to Edward Kim's clever, occasionally weird mashups at Mott St. to the beautifully plated artistry of Dave Park at the late suburban Hanbun.

Jennifer Kim of Passerotto is the next candidate for this esteemed club. Kim, you may remember, was formerly a chef at the ungoogleably named, extortionately priced, and ultimately doomed C Chicago, who escaped that shipwreck with her then-boyfriend, chef Bill Montaigne, and resurfaced to open Snaggletooth, a marvelous Lakeview microdeli where the two made art with cured fish and bagels. There she had a hand in creating a pastrami-cured trout tartine with a schmear of seared, pureed kimchi

piled on pumpernickel. "It's one the most visually stunning and delicious things I've ingested all year," I slobbered in 2016, just a year before the place closed.

Now Kim, who'd previously bounced around the One Off Hospitality restaurants Nico Osteria, Blackbird, and Avec, has resurfaced in Andersonville with a novel marriage of Korean and Italian food, drawing inspiration from a theoretical summit between umma and nonna. Kim says the roots of this inspiration are in her student days at UIC, when Taylor Street offered none of the comforting Korean food she grew up on but plenty of Italian-American to fill the void.

In truth, the food at Passerotto (which translates as "little sparrow") is nothing like granny's. That's evidenced by a series of the raw proteins known as *hwe* at the top of her focused menu. Some of these pretty little plates—lovingly and respectfully accented jewels of cleanly cut fish flesh—still exhibit the infuriating qualities of crudo. Specifically, a few lean toward the precious and parsimonious, like slices of alabaster fluke adorned with tiny maitake mushrooms and shreds of aromatic celery leaf, or hamachi adorned with mint and scarlet slices of plum. They're delicious, and they recall her fine work at Snaggletooth, but they leave you wanting more.

On the other hand, a plate of sweet bay scallops ornamented with tiny purple catmint flowers (or whatever else the forager brings in), dabs of funky umami-rich XO sauce, and a potent soy-onion puree, pierced with acidic citron, is one of the loveliest plates of food I've encountered all year (maybe even since the Snaggletooth tartine?), and a rare case of crudo that satisfies in proportion to its price.

Same goes for a pile of ruddy, funky, life-affirming lamb tartare showered in Parmesan and violet chive blossoms with sweet curls of Asian pear, a soy-mirin-sugar confit egg yolk lurking in its midst waiting to disperse its rich, unctuousness. Large salty puffed-rice crackers dusted with black lime, the irresistible vehicle for this, earn a spot in the movie-theater-snack hall of fame I'm currently seeking funding for.

Less remarkable is the kimchi pajeon, the iconic crispy-soft, sometimes gooey flour pancake that precedes so many Korean feasts. Kim uses chickpea rather than wheat flour—a nod to Ligurian farinata—which makes the pancake refuse to rise and gives it a dry, ➔



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## FOOD & DRINK

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Sundubu, soft tofu stew, with seafood, tofu, radish, and mizuna ALISHA SOMMER

continued from 35

grainy mouthfeel. Embedded with charred scallions and topped with fresh spring peas and a mustard-green pesto, it's a pretty plate that begs for something to approximate the traditional soy-vinegar dipping sauce.

On the other hand, Kim's fried chicken, called "Pelicana Chicken" after the Korean fast-food chain, has a brittle-crisp coating that stands up to a thick, punchy glaze of gochuchang and Calabrian chiles. The sticky, cylindrical rice-cake street-food snacks ddeokbokki are treated like a composed pasta, grilled to offset their inherent chewiness and blanketed with lamb neck ragu and Parmesan shavings. The closest thing to a traditional Italian pasta is a springlike bowl of firm cavatelli luxuriating in umami-drenched nori butter and singing of the soon-to-vanish springtime with asparagus and pickled ramps, deep-fried sweet potato chips adding crunch. Hwe dup bap is the anti-poke, nutty farro instead of rice topped with a generous portion of, say, tuna, fluke, or hamachi, with deep-fried kale, thin-sliced watermelon radish, and lots of garden greenery.

The menu climaxes with two large-format dishes meant to be shared, accompanied by a half-dozen banchan—seaweed, sweet potato salad, radish and cabbage kimchis. The kalbi is a single length of sous vide and grilled short rib, sliced in perfect squares and redeployed atop the bone next to some artfully plated red-cabbage kimchi. A spadelike shiso leaf with a smear of ssamjang is the vehicle for

these robustly beefy bites. The other large offering is a conflation of the Tuscan seafood stew cacciucco and the tofu stew sundubu. As in both traditions, it's brimming with prawns, clams, and mussels, but here those come with soft chunks of tofu, slices of watermelon radish, and mizuna. Its broth, with a mild infusion of kimchi juice, is glossy and full of body but missing some of the sour-and-spicy character that makes sundubu an ideal hangover helper.

You might need that after all, even given the concision of the beverage list: a handful of reds, whites, and rosés, with surprisingly few Italians among them. Among the half-dozen drafts, the local Prima farmhouse cider is an excellent pairing with many of these dishes, and, amid a trio of cocktails, the Coalmine's Canary is a truly delightful refresher of Malort, gin, and grapefruit. Mercifully, there are no sojutinis.

For dessert there's just one option: the Tuscan biscuits known as cantuccini with the traditional pairing of a glass of the dessert wine vin santo or the "straw wine" passito, made from dried grapes.

The food at Passerotto is more Korean than Italian, the latter more a subtle, subordinate influence that in most cases is expressed seamlessly. Even with a few missteps, Kim has firmly cemented her place among the chefs doing progressive, exciting things with Korean food, and I'm eager to see what else she comes up with.

@MikeSula





One City Tap  
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BOOZE

# A place at the bar

One City Tap and Slide Bar prove there's still a future for the south-side neighborhood tap.

By EMELINE POSNER

It's easy to miss McKinley Park's newest—and only—neighborhood bar among the billboards and bustling traffic at the intersection of Archer and Ashland. All the better that One City Tap has two sets of doors—one on Ashland, one on Archer—that open up into its surprisingly spacious interior. Double the door, double the likelihood that a passerby will end up sitting at the linoleum-topped bar, sipping on a spicy cucumber margarita.

The father-and-son duo behind One City Tap, Marco Lopez and Marco “J.R.” Lopez, opened up the bar's double doors just over a year ago after living in the neighborhood for more than a decade. The site is easily accessible by the Orange Line, the 62 and 9 buses, and the Stevenson Expressway, and the Lopezes thought it was the perfect location. With housing prices in Bridgeport and Pilsen rising, more people are starting to think about moving to McKinley Park, says J.R. “The Orange Line, it's the new big thing.” One City Tap is well poised to pick up the traffic: aside from a members-only bar farther west down 35th Street and the new Marz Taproom about a mile to the southeast, it's the only bar in the neighborhood.

The “neighborhood bar” has come to feel like an endangered species on the south and west sides. Mayor Daley's crusades against package goods shops in the 90s left behind a fraction of

the neighborhood taverns that once existed, and widespread moratoria on liquor licenses make it difficult to open a new watering hole without connections or clout. “The liquor license is hard to get,” says Marco. “Especially on the south side. Especially for Latinos.” The older neighborhood bars that do exist in the area are not always welcoming spaces and, as of late, the brewpub seems to be getting more popular. But One City Tap and the Slide Bar, Tri-Taylor's newest and only bar, are proving that the neighborhood bar is still alive and kicking.

Both have settled into spaces that have been neighborhood bars for decades, which has helped the owners avoid the cost of building a spot from scratch; the Slide Bar also inherited a grandfathered-in liquor license. But both One City Tap and the Slide Bar are adding their own twists. For the Lopezes, that means opening up their doors to everyone. One City replaced Tommy O's, an Irish bar that wasn't known for being particularly inviting, says Marco, and few of the old regulars have come in since the ownership changed. While most of the Lopezes' customers are McKinley Park residents or from Pilsen or Bridgeport, some come from the north side, especially for the bar's popular Otro Ritmo Punk Night, hosted monthly by local punk enthusiasts Jorge Vargas and Alice McGorty. The Lopezes welcome those who make the voyage down. “It's only

Chicago, one city. For us, [there's] no south, no north—that's why we put the name One City Tap,” Marco says.

A spokesman for 12th Ward alderman George Cardenas wrote in an e-mail that One City has already become a hub for neighborhood gatherings: “A keen piece of the revitalization of McKinley Park is being built upon communication. One City Tap offers the community a social space where our future plans will be drafted.”

Now that business has picked up, the bar is starting to make more donations to the community—late last year, the Lopezes contributed to bike and holiday toy drives, and this May they helped fund-raise for a CPS scholarship for undocumented students. And they're already planning their next steps: a music venue around the corner, and then maybe a sandwich shop or casual cafe. In the meantime, they're hopeful that the neighborhood, which is still largely residential, sees an increase in locally owned business. “If we're building more business, people from everywhere come in,” Marco says. This is why he supports a potential rival, a new brewpub that may open several blocks south on Ashland. “More business, more taxes, more benefits for the neighborhood.”

A few miles north, in Tri-Taylor, the Slide Bar is building off the legacy of Rick's Bar, the beloved neighborhood joint that preceded it. If the name sounds familiar, that may be because you've seen Nida Rodriguez slinging burgers from the Slide Ride, a light-pink food truck that's been making the rounds at nearby festivals for the last seven years. Now Rodriguez has put down roots in Tri-Taylor, serving up burgers and other thoughtfully prepared bar food from a spick-and-span, well-stocked bar. Tri-Taylor has grown into the go-to neighborhood for food trucks interested in settling down—both the La Adelita Truck and the Aloha Wagon have opened up restaurants there in the last several years. Rodriguez heard about the opportunity to open a bar, in fact, from the owner of La Adelita, who knew that Rick Mead, the owner of the eponymous bar on the corner of Western and Taylor, was retiring after 30 years in business.

The process of opening took a year of legal wrangling, Rodriguez says, because of the liquor license moratorium in place in the neighborhood. But with the support of 28th Ward alderman Jason Ervin, Rodriguez was able to acquire a liquor license by buying out Mead's corporation, which already had one. After taking over, she made some changes to the bar's interior, installing new tables and chairs,

raising the ceiling, and putting new art on the walls. Otherwise, she's kept the fundamentals in place, focusing on perfecting the menu and leaning on Mead's old customers for advice. The result, she says, is a bar strong on bourbon and craft beer, with a popular weekly trivia night and a recently introduced jazz night.

“Western Avenue has been an issue for [Tri-Taylor]—there's not enough business there,” says Rebecca Hendricks, secretary of the Tri-Taylor Neighborhood Association. Most businesses are located on Taylor Street; Slide Bar is one of a small number on the north-south street. “Slide Bar helps create desirable traffic up Western,” says Hendricks, “and it's coming into its own as a neighborhood gathering space.”

“We're a place where people in the neighborhood wanna come for a birthday party, . . . [where] the Neighborhood Association will have their meetings,” Rodriguez says. “A lot of people know each other and are very welcoming to newbies.” It's a bar designed around the neighborhood it's in, but the bartenders are just as friendly to newcomers. Rodriguez is one herself: shortly after she took over the bar, she moved to the neighborhood.

After months of building out and adjusting, Rodriguez feels like the bar is finally where she and her team want it. But it's still a *little* too soon to celebrate. “We never had our grand opening yet, so [on our first anniversary] we want to do a big, grand reopening party.”

@emelpos

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## STRAIGHT DOPE

By Cecil Adams

**Q:** If the world were to get serious about reducing carbon emissions, there would be a lot less air travel. I've read that trains are much more efficient than flying on a per-passenger-mile basis. Could we reduce our carbon emissions by taking a boat across the Atlantic or Pacific like in the old days? —**GREG H. WINOOSKI, VERMONT**

**A:** You mean a rowboat? A sailboat? Because past that, you're not helping any. Which form of passenger travel is least lousy for the environment is an endlessly complicated question, Greg, so give yourself credit for finding an angle we can dispose of immediately: ocean liners are not the answer.

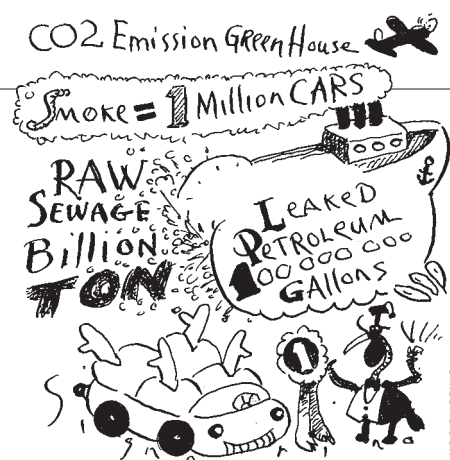
How bad are they currently? A 2017 study by the German environmental organization NABU estimated that a typical European cruise ship's per-day particulate emissions are equivalent to that of a million cars combined. That's just from the smokestacks. Coming out the other end is about a billion tons of raw sewage dumped annually into the world's oceans, plus a hundred million gallons of leaked petroleum products. You can't do much worse if you're looking for an environmentally friendly way to travel.

Unless you're hoofing it, though, most forms of travel take some earthly toll, and how to calculate that toll is the subject of a lot of emergent research. A 2013 paper in *Environmental Science and Technology* figured that the "climate impact from a long-distance trip can easily vary by a factor of 10 per passenger depending on mode choice, vehicle efficiency, and occupancy."

And indeed there are endless ways to run the numbers. That particular paper looks at some factors less obvious than mere CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: for instance, contrails left by planes in the thin upper air, which can intensify the greenhouse effect. For simplicity's sake, though, let's focus on the basic variables: emissions, passenger load, and distance. And let's assume we're talking about a big trip—500 miles or more.

Pound for pound, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists, the very best bet is coach bus, followed closely by train travel. (City buses, we'll note, are a different beast, their impact wildly dependent on how full they are; buses running at off-peak hours may generate eight times more emissions per passenger than during peak.) That's probably unsurprising, but say there's no train or bus option for where you're going. Is driving next in line?

Not necessarily. There are conditions under which it makes more sense to travel by plane



than car, and not just because seawater is hell on your Chevy's undercarriage. Their emissions might be stupendous, but airplanes gain back lots of ground in load capacity and distance covered. Because most of a flight's energy expenditure comes during takeoff and landing, the longer the plane spends at cruise altitude, the more environmentally friendly it becomes. If you're flying from Chicago to Milwaukee, you're basically lighting jet fuel just to watch it burn; New York to LA, though, is another story. And air travel is becoming ever more efficient for the same reasons everybody hates to fly: the airlines really pack those bodies in, and the fuller the flight the better the per-passenger efficiency.

Where driving sits in the rankings is largely a factor of who else is coming along. As one researcher put it, "Traveling alone in a large car can be as bad for the climate as flying, but driving with three in a small car could have an equally low impact as a train ride." At greater distances, UCS figured two travelers is roughly the threshold between whether it's better, carbonwise, to fly or drive. If you're a family of four on a 1,000-mile trip, driving even a big old SUV works out better than flying, or taking the train for that matter; if you're a party of just one or two and your car's not electric, you may as well go by air. And if you do, for god's sake fly coach: a 2017 World Bank study estimated the per-passenger carbon emissions associated with first-class travel can be as much as nine times greater than economy because of the cabin space used.

Not to end on too dour a note here, but have you considered a staycation, Greg? A brand-new study out of Australia reckons that as of 2013, tourism's carbon footprint accounted for 8 percent of world greenhouse emissions and was projected to keep growing, as demand for recreational travel stays ahead of emissions-reducing tech. Planes, trains, automobiles—it's hard to think we're not just rearranging deck chairs on the *Titanic*. ■

**Send questions to Cecil via [straightdope.com](http://straightdope.com) or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 30 N. Racine, suite 300, Chicago 60607.**



# SAVAGE LOVE

By Dan Savage

## Blown away

Can a straight guy ethically accept one-way blow jobs from his gay buddy?

**Q:** I am a 24-year-old straight guy who recently broke up with my girlfriend of more than four years. One of the reasons was a general lack of sexually compatibility. She had a particular aversion to oral sex—both giving and receiving. I didn't get a blow job the whole time we were together. Which brings me to why I am writing: One of my closest friends, "Sam," is a gay guy. Shortly after breaking up with my girlfriend, I was discussing my lack of oral sex with Sam and he said he'd be willing to "help me out." I agreed, and Sam gave me an earth-shattering blow job. I was glad to get some and had no hang-ups about a guy sucking me. Since then, Sam has blown me three more times. My problem is I'm starting to feel guilty and worry I am using Sam. He's a very good buddy, and I'm concerned this lopsided sexual arrangement might be bad for our friendship. But these are literally the only blow jobs I've received since I was a teenager. What should I do? —**TOTALLY HAVE RESERVATIONS OVER ADVANTAGE TAKING**

**A:** Only one person knows how Sam feels about this "lopsided sexual arrangement," THROAT, and it isn't me—it's Sam.

That's why I wrote you back, asked you for Sam's contact information, and offered to ask Sam on your behalf. You sent me Sam's contact info, and a few minutes later I was chatting with him.

My first question for Sam: Is he one of those gay guys who get off on "servicing" straight guys?

"I've never done anything with a straight guy before this," said Sam. "So, no. I have only ever dated and hooked

up with gay guys before!"

So why offer to blow THROAT?

"I didn't know until after he broke up with his girlfriend that he hadn't gotten a blow job the whole time they were together—four years!" Sam said. "When I told him I'd be happy to help him out, I was joking. I swear I wasn't making a pass at my straight friend! But there was this long pause, and then he got serious and said he'd be into it. I wondered for a minute if it would be weird for me to blow my friend, and there was definitely a bit of convincing each other that we were serious. When he started taking his clothes off, I thought, 'So this is going to happen.' It was not awkward after. We even started joking about it right away."

So does this "lopsided sexual arrangement" bother Sam?

"I don't mind," said Sam. "I really like sucking dick and I'm really enjoying sucking his dick. And from my perspective, we're both having fun—I've jacked off thinking about it after each time I sucked him. I know—now—that he thinks it is a bit unfair to me. But I don't feel that way at all."

"[I assume] he will eventually get into a relationship with a woman again, and our arrangement will end," added Sam. "I only hope nothing is weird between us in the future."

I had one last question: Is THROAT any good at getting his cock sucked?

"I have to say, he is very good at it," Sam said. He really gets into it, he moans, he lasts a long time. That's part of what makes sucking his cock so much fun."

**Q:** I'm a straight guy in a LTR with a bi woman. We recently had a threesome with a bi male acquaintance.

We made it clear that I'm not into guys and that she was going to be the center of attention. He said he was fine with this. A little bit into us hooking up, he said he wanted to suck my dick. I wasn't sure about it at first. My girlfriend encouraged it because she thought it was hot, and I ended up saying yes, but I stated that I didn't want to reciprocate. A bit later, while my girlfriend was sucking his dick, he said he wanted me to join her. I said no, he kept badgering me to do it, I kept saying no, and then he physically tried to shove my head down toward his crotch. My girlfriend and I both got pissed and said he had to leave. Now he's bitching to our mutual friends about how I had an insecure straight-boy freak-out, he didn't get to come after we both got ours, and so on. I'm concerned about what our friends think of me, but even more so, I'm concerned that I did a shitty thing. That said, I don't think it's fair for him to be angry that I didn't blow him. Is oral reciprocation so necessary that it doesn't matter that we agreed in advance that I wouldn't have to? —**NOT ONE TO BE INCONSIDERATE**

**A:** You did nothing wrong. And if after hearing your side of the story, NOTBI, your mutual friends side with a person who pressured you to do something you were clear about not wanting to do and even pressured you to perform it by physically forcing your head down to his cock, you can solve the "mutual friends" problem by cutting these so-called friends out of your life. **[X]**

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## NEW

**Abigail Williams, Ghost Bath** 8/29, 7 PM, Reggie's Music Joint

**Matt Andersen** 10/2, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/21, noon

**Courtney Marie Andrews** 9/25, 9 PM, Hideout

**Anne-Marie** 9/24, 7 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Band of Heathens** 9/19, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

**Blitzen Trapper** 9/24-25, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Buffalo Tom** 9/8, 7:30 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Call Me Karizma** 8/19, 7 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Jim Campilongo Trio** 9/4, 8 PM, Green Mill

**Captured! by Robots, Cealed Kasket** 10/17, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+

**Cassy** 7/20, 10 PM, Smart Bar

**Nikka Costa** 8/7, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/22, noon

**Elephante** 10/20, 8:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 6/22, noon, 17+

**Brian Fallon, Craig Finn** 10/11, 7:30 PM, Park West, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Family & Friends** 9/14, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Foxing** 9/30, 7 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Growlers** 10/4, 8 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 6/22, noon, 18+

**Martin Hayes Quartet** 10/20, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 6/22, 8 AM

**Hurt Everybody** 7/20, 6 PM, Concord Music Hall

**Ionnalee, Tungorna** 8/13, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Jim James, Alynda Segarra** 11/9, 7:30 PM, the Vic, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Noah Kahan** 10/19, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Gabriel Kahane** 11/16, 8:30 PM, Constellation, on sale Fri 6/22, 9 AM, 18+

**Egor Kreed** 11/15, 7 PM, Concord Music Hall

**Mike Krol** 9/17, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Harold Lopez-Nussa Trio** 9/16, 7 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 6/22, 8 AM

**Lera Lynn** 9/21, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/21, noon

**Mashrou Leila** 9/6, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Bruce Molsky's Mountain Drifters** 9/28, 8 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music, on sale Fri 6/22, 8 AM

**Monster Magnet, Electric Citizen** 10/2, 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 17+

**Monxx, Yakz, Aweminus** 7/7, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

**NF** 10/7, 7 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Octopus Project** 7/16, 8:30 PM, Beat Kitchen

**Frank Orrall** 8/2, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/21, noon

**Steven Page Trio** 10/18, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/21, noon

**Panic! At the Disco** 2/4, 7 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont, on sale Fri 6/22, noon

**Louis Prima Jr. & the Witnesses** 8/28, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 6/21, noon

**Record Company, Madisen Ward & the Mama Bear** 9/29, 8 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Reuben & the Dark** 10/25, 8 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Reverend Horton Heat** 11/30, 8 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Revocation, Exhumed** 10/12, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

**Rich Brian, Joji, Keith Ape, Higher Brothers, Kohh** 10/14, 6 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Toni Romiti** 7/29, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+

**Saintseneca** 10/12, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM, 18+

**Shinyribs** 9/7, 9 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 6/22, 11 AM

**Slaughter Beach, Dog** 9/22, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

**Smokescreens, Molochs** 8/28, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Stray Birds** 9/20, 9 PM, Hideout

**Strfrkr** 10/2-3, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 6/22, 11 AM, 18+

**Tops** 8/20, 9 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

**Frankie Valli & the Four Seasons** 11/3, 8 PM, Auditorium Theatre, on sale Fri 6/22, noon

**Kurt Vile & the Violators** 12/22, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 6/22, 11 AM, 18+

**Ben Weasel & His Iron String Quartet** 8/18, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

**Wino, Xasthur** 8/9, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen

**Donovan Woods & the Opposition** 9/26, 7 PM, Virgin Hotel

## UPDATED

**Car Seat Headrest, Naked Giants** 9/7, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, moved from the Vic, additional tickets on sale Fri 6/22, 10 AM

**Gospel of the Serpent with Birth A.D., Black Devotion, Blaspharian, and more** 7/19-21, 7 PM, Cobra Lounge, canceled, 17+

**MU330** 8/17, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, canceled, 17+

## UPCOMING

**Lily Allen** 10/31, 7:30 PM, the Vic

**Apocalypse Hoboken** 7/13-14, 7:30 PM, Chop Shop, 18+

**Jill Barber** 9/22, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+

**Beach Boys, Righteous Brothers** 8/24, 7 PM, Ravinia Festival, Highland Park

**Belly** 10/6, 8 PM, the Vic, 18+

**The Body, Big Brave** 6/29, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

**Bongripper** 7/13, 8 PM, Metro, 18+

**A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie, Femdot** 8/3, 11 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

**Jen Cloher** 7/31, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Code Orange** 6/28, 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

**Phil Collins** 10/22, 8 PM, United Center

**Dance With the Dead** 10/5, 9 PM, Subterranean, 17+

**Dead Sara** 9/29, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 18+

**Deafheaven, Mono** 7/30, 7 PM, Metro, 18+

**Deep Purple, Judas Priest** 8/22, 7 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park

**Dinosaur Jr.** 7/18, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

**Jeremy Enigk** 6/30, 8:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+

**Erasure** 7/27, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre

**Roky Erickson** 11/9, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall

**FIDLAR, Dilly Dally** 9/8, 7:30 PM, the Vic

**Fleetwood Mac** 10/6, 8 PM, United Center

**Florence & the Machine, Perfume Genius** 10/19, 7 PM, United Center

**Greg Fox** 7/28, 9 PM, Hideout

**Gordon Lightfoot** 9/16, 8 PM, Copernicus Center

**Gorilla Biscuits, Modern Life Is War** 9/29, 1 PM, Metro

**Gorillaz** 10/16, 7:30 PM, United Center

**Anthony Green, Good Old War** 7/8, 6:30 PM, Bottom Lounge

**Guided by Voices** 8/26, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston

**Here Come the Mummies** 10/12, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

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**Honorary Title** 8/16, 7:30 PM, Lincoln Hall

**James Hunter Six** 7/8, 8 PM, City Winery

**Joey Purp** 9/22, 9:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

**King Buffalo** 8/15, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

**Lemuria** 7/27, 10 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

**Jeff Lynne's ELO** 8/15, 8 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont

**Melvins** 7/31, 7:30 PM, Park West

**The Men** 8/25, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Janelle Monae** 7/5, 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre

**Negative Approach, Dayglo Abortions** 6/28, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

**Oh Sees, Timmy's Organism** 10/12, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

**Oneida, Cave** 7/28, 10 PM, Empty Bottle

**Pelican, Cloakroom** 7/26, 6 and 9 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

**Phish** 10/26-28, 7:30 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont

**Rich Homie Quan** 7/3, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 18+

**The Sea & Cake, Moonrise Nation** 8/16, 6:30 PM, Pritzker Pavilion, Millennium Park

**Ty Segall, William Tyler** 11/2, 7:30 PM, Thalia Hall

**Simulacrum, John Zorn** 8/11, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

**Sleigh Bells** 8/17, 9 PM, Metro, 18+

**Sparta** 8/10, 9 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

**Sting, Shaggy** 10/2, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom

**Tacocat** 8/10, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

**Tony Toni Tone** 8/10, 7 PM, the Promontory

**Unsane, Child Bite** 7/14, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**VNV Nation** 12/1, 7:30 PM, Metro, 18+

**Wailin' Jennys** 10/26, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music

**Wax Idols, Shadow Age** 9/9, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Weezer, Pixies, Wombats** 7/7, 7:30 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park

**Wild Nothing** 11/9, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

**Jess Williamson** 8/8, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

**Witch Mountain** 8/8, 8 PM, Reggie's Music Joint

**Wiz Khalifa, Rae Sremmurd** 7/29, 6 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park



## GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

WHEN GOSSIP WOLF first heard Chicago singer-songwriter **Phillip-Michael Scales** a few years back, the nephew of blues great B.B. King was making thumping, tuneful folk-rock as Briar Rabbit. On Scales's new EP, **Sinner-Songwriter**, he's embraced a more soul-inflected sound, swirling with bluesy alt-rock riffs. In the moody video for the EP's first single, "Lover, Let Me Be," a man and a woman circle each other warily around a swimming pool. On Thursday, June 21, Scales celebrates the EP with a set at **Emporium** in Wicker Park with Mutts and Forks of Ivy.

Last year footworker **Jamal "Litebulb" Oliver**, cofounder of dance crew the **Era**, partnered with scene documentarian **Wills Glasspiegel** and former McKinsey & Company consultant **Drew Alt** to launch the nonprofit **Open the Circle**. The group finds money for creative projects in underserved communities, and to start it's focusing on African-American electronic music and dance. OTC's 2018 initiatives include the free footwork summer camp Big Circle, a footwork documentary called **160**, and new performances of the Era's stage show, **In the Wurkz**. On Sunday, June 24, OTC hosts a fund-raiser at **Links Hall** with footwork dancing and a panel discussion.

**Toastamania**, launched by the members of **Texas Toast Chainsaw Massacre**, combines loud, obnoxious bands and pretend WrestleMania-style rivalries—if you're lucky, you'll get to see musicians endanger themselves approximating a ladder match. The party usually goes down at a DIY space, but Toastamania IX is at **Subterranean** at 3 PM on Saturday, June 23. Thrashy NYC hardcore band **Leeway** headlines the 18-band bill, though the logos on the flyer are so incomprehensible that this wolf could've counted wrong.

On Friday, June 22, Mama guitarist **Dan Rico** drops the solo album **Dreamy** (TMB Limited), full of shuffling soul-punk jams perfect for lazy, sweaty afternoons. He plays a release party that night at the **Hideout**. —J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip\_Wolf or e-mail [gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com](mailto:gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com).





**The Posies**  
30TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR  
JON AUER • KEN STRINGFELLOW  
DAVE FOX • MIKE MUSBURGER  
SPECIAL GUESTS  
**MATERIAL REISSUE**  
WITH TERRA LIGHTFOOT  
THIS SATURDAY! JUNE 23  
PARK WEST

**AL DI MEOLA**  
NOTORIOUS Electric  
Tour 2018/2019  
Music from Elegant  
Gypsy to Opus  
THIS SUNDAY!  
JUNE 24  
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**THE RECORD COMPANY**  
**ALL OF THIS LIFE TOUR 2018**  
SPECIAL GUESTS: *Madisen Ward AND THE Mama Bear*  
**93XRT**  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29  
ON SALE THIS FRIDAY AT 10AM!




**MICHAEL CHE**  
SPECIAL GUESTS: CIPHA SOUNDS  
SATURDAY, JULY 14  
VIC THEATRE



**MELVINS**  
SPECIAL GUEST: JON SPENCER  
JULY 31 • PARK WEST

**THE GROWLERS**  
**BEACH GOTH TOUR 2018**  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4  
ON SALE THIS FRIDAY AT NOON!



AN EVENING WITH  
**BRIAN FALLON**  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST **CRAIG FINN**  
SONGS FROM THE HYMNAL—  
THURSDAY, OCT. 11 • PARK WEST  
ON SALE THIS FRIDAY AT 10AM!



**JIM JAMES**  
SOLO ACOUSTIC  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST  
ALYNDIA SEGARRA FROM HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF  
**93XRT** FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9  
VIC THEATRE  
PERFORMING SELECTIONS FROM HIS ENTIRE MY MORNING JACKET & SOLO CAREER  
JIMJAMES.COM  
ON SALE THIS FRIDAY AT 10AM!



**Kurt Vile + the Violators**  
SPECIAL GUEST JESSICA PRATT  
**93XRT** SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 22  
ON SALE THIS FRIDAY AT 11AM!



SYLVAN ESSO -July 23-SOLD OUT! • MY BLOODY VALENTINE -July 27 & 28 • SLEEP -Aug. 1 • THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM -Aug. 11-SOLD OUT! • PARKWAY DRIVE -Sept. 5  
HOZIER -Sept. 21 -SOLD OUT! • THE THE -Sept. 22-SOLD OUT! • SHANEY GRAVES -Sept. 26 • EMANCIPATOR ENSEMBLE -Friday, Oct. 5  
HIPPO CAMPUS -Saturday, Oct. 6 • JESSIE J -Friday, Oct. 12 • GARBAGE -Oct. 17 • EDEN -Oct. 20 • LAKE STREET DIVE -Oct. 27 • TENACIOUS D -Nov. 13 & 14 SOLD OUT!





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